CLARENCE:

A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

" Return, return, and in thy heart engraven keep my lore,
The lesser wealth, the lighter load,—small blame betides the poor."

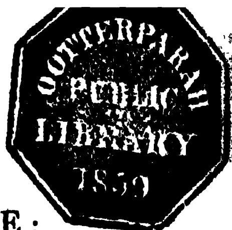
Bishop Heber.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CLARENCE;

OR,

A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

"Is there in human form that bears a heart—
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?"—BURNS

Gerald Roscoe to Mrs. Layton.

"ON looking over your letter a second
" time, my dear Mrs. Layton, I find there
" is enough of it unanswered to give me a
" pretence for addressing you again; and as
" I know no more agreeable employment of
" one of my many leisure hours than commu-

" nicating with you, I will contrast your pic-
" ture of the miseries of rustic hospitality
" and rustic habits, with the trials of a poor
" devil, condemned to the vulgarity and
" necessity of dragging through the summer
" months in town. We all look at our pre-
" sent, petty vexations, through the magni-
" fying end of the glass, and then, turning
" our instrument, give to the condition of
" others the softness and enchantment of
" distance.

" But to my picture. Behold me then,
" after having waited through the day in my
" *clientless* office, retired to my humble
" lodging, No. — Walker-street, in a garret
" apartment, (by courtesy styled the attic,)
" as hot, even after the sun is down, as a
" well-heated oven when the fire is with-
" drawn, or as hot as you might imagine
" 'accommodations for a single gentleman'
" in *tophet*. The room is fifteen feet square,
" or rather the floor,—as the ceiling descends
" at an angle of forty-five degrees, so that
" whenever I pass the centre of my apart-
" ment I am compelled to a perpetual salaam,

"or to having my head *organized* in a man-
"ner that would confound the metaphysical
"materialism of a German.

"My dear mother, nobly as she has con-
"formed herself to our fallen fortunes, has
"not yet been able to dispense with certain
"personal refinements for herself, or for her
"unworthy son. I believe in my soul, she
"has never wafted a sigh from our landlady's
"sordid little parlour to the almost forgotten
"splendors of our drawing-room; but there
"is something intolerably offensive to her ha-
"bits and tastes in the arrangements of a
"plebeian bed-room. Accordingly she has
"fitted up my apartment with what she
"considers necessaries; but that first neces-
"sity—that chiefest of all luxuries—space,
"she cannot command; nor can all her
"ingenuity overcome the principle of resist-
"ance in matter, so that my 'indispensable'
"furniture limits my locomotive faculties to
"six feet by four. The knocks I get in any
"one day against my bureaus, writing-table,
"book-case, &c., would convert a Berkleian
"philosopher.

"I have but one window, an offset from

"the roof, to which my dormant ceiling "forms a covert way. My horizon is bounded "by tiled roofs and square chimneys. No "graceful outlines of foliage; no broad lake "to sparkle and dimple on the verge of "the starry canopy; no 'heaven-kissing "hill;' but chimneys and roofs, and roofs "and chimneys, for one who counts it high "pleasure to behold

'The lofty woods—the forest wide and long,
Adorn'd with leaves and branches fresh and green,
In whose cool bowers the birds, with many a song,
Do welcome with their quire the summer's queen;
The meadows fair, where Flora's gifts among
Are intermixed with verdant grass between;
The silver-scaled fish that softly swim
Within the sweet brook's crystal wat'ry stream.'

"These are the sorrows of my exile from "nature in this her glorious ascendant. I "say nothing, my dear Mrs. L., of being "chained to the city, when the sweet spirits "that gave it life are fled. In short, I will "say nothing more of my miseries and pri- "vations. I will even confess that my little "cell has its pleasures; humble though they "be, still they are pleasures. I do not



" mean the dreams and visions that sport
" about the brain of a young man who has
" his own fortunes to carve in the world,
" and who of course indemnifies himself for
" the absolute negation of his present condi-
" tion by the brilliant apparition of the future.
" It is well for us that our modesty is not
" gauged by our anticipations! My humble
" attic pleasure consists in looking down,
" like Don Cleophas, on my neighbours—in
" guessing at their spirit and history from
" their outward world. You, my dear
" madam, who live in the courtly luxury of
" ——— street, if your eye glanced through
" your curtained window at the court-yards
" of your neighbours, would only see the ser-
" vile labours of their domestics. You can
" therefore have no imagination of the reve-
" lations of life to my eye. A curious con-
" trast there is between the front and rear of
" these establishments of our humble citizens
" — the formal aspect of the ambitious front
" parlour, and the *laissez aller* style of the
" back apartments. Suffer me, in this dearth
" of parties, operas, and whatever makes an
" accredited drawing-room topic, to intro-

" duce you to one of my neighbours and his " *petit paradis*,' for so Abeille calls and con- " siders his yard, a territory of about thirty " feet by fourteen. Poor Abeille !—poor— " what can make a Frenchman poor ? They " ride through life on the 'virtuoso's saddle, " which will be sure to amble when the world " is at the hardest trot.' They have hea- " ven's charter for happiness.

" Abeille was a seigneur of St. Domingo, " and possessed one of the richest estates of " that Hesperian island. Did you never " observe that a Frenchman's temperament " is the reverse of the ungracious state that " 'never is, but always to be blessed.' Let " his present condition be abject as it will, " he *has been* blest. Abeille revels now in " the retrospective glories of his seigniory, " from which the poor fellow was happy to " escape, during the troubles, with his life, " his family, and a few jewels, with the " avails of which he has since purchased this " little property; and a scene of perfect " *French* happiness it is. Abeille has two " lodgers, an old bachelor, bitten with the " mania of learning French, and a clerk qua-

"lifying himself for a supercargo. He "teaches young ladies to paint flowers. His "pretty daughters, Félicité and Angélique, "embroider muslin and weave lace, and by "these means, and the infinite ingenuity of "a French *ménage*, they contrive to live in "independence, and so far from any vain "misery about their past magnificence, it "seems merely to cast a vivid hue—a sort of "sunset glory—over their present mediocrity.

"Abeille's little *parterre* gives him far "more pleasure, he confesses, than he ever "received from his West-India plantation. "This *parterre* is the triumph of taste over "expense. He has covered with a trellis a "vile one-story back-building, that pro-"trudes its hideous form the whole length "of the yard, and conducted over it a grape-"vine, that yields fruit as delicious and "plentiful as if it grew in sunny France. "The high board-fence, over which once "flaunted a vulgar creeper, is now embossed "with a multi-flora. In the angle of the "yard next the house, and concealing with "exquisite art an ugly indentation of the "wall, is a moss-rose, Abeille's *chef-*

" *d'œuvre.* This he has fed, watered,
" pruned, and in every way cherished, till it
" has surmounted the fence; and to-day I
" saw him gazing at a cluster of buds on the
" very summit, as a victor would have
" looked on his laurel-crown. At the ex-
" tremity of the yard is a series of shelves
" arranged like the benches of an amphi-
" theatre, (mark the economy of space and
" sunshine!) filled with pots containing the
" finest flowers of all seasons. The back
" windows are festooned, not screened—a
" Frenchman never blinds his windows—
" with honeysuckles, coquetting their way
" to two bird-cages, where, embowered and
" perfumed, are perched canaries and mock-
" ing-birds, who enjoy here every sweet in
" nature but liberty, and the little servile
" rogues sing as if they had forgotten that;
" and to finish all, the few unoccupied feet
" of the '*petit paradis*,' just leaving space
" for Abeille to meander among the flowers,
" are set with medallions of carnations,
" tulips, hyacinths, and mignionette. I
" must not omit the tame crow, Abeille's
" esquire, who follows him like his shadow,

" and madame's pets and darlings, an
" enormous parrot, the most accomplished
" of his tribe—a Mathews among parrots—
" and the largest and ugliest shock that ever
" lay in a Frenchwoman's lap. There sits
" madame, at this moment, coquetting with
" the parrot, scolding Belle, and taking
" snuff, her only occupation in life.
" '*Pauvre femme,*' Abeille says, '*elle ne*
" *sait pas travailler—toutes les femmes de*
" *St. Domingue sont ainsi paresseuses,*
" *mais, elle est si bonne, si économe, et si*
" *fidèle!* '*Pauvre femme*' indeed! Abeille
" looks at her through the vista of long past
" time, or he would not account the latter
" quality such a virtue. But if madame
" does not, her pretty daughters do know
" how to work. Félicité wrought herself
" into the heart of a youth, who in spite of
" her poverty, and in spite of the Yankee
" prejudice of all his kindred against a
" *French* girl, married her, and toiled hard
" to support her, when last week, like the
" gifts of a fairy tale, came a rich legacy to
" Félicité from Port-au-Prince, the bequest
" of a *ci-devant* slave. Never were people

" happier. I see them now prettily grouped " at their chamber window, Félicité leaning " on her husband's shoulder, and playing " bo-peep with her child, the child in the " arms of her old maiden aunt Eli, who has " forgotten to put on her false curls, even " forgotten her matin mass ever since this " bantling came into the world. So easy is " it, my dear Mrs. Layton, for the affections " of your sex to revert to their natural and " happiest channel!

" But the prettiest flower of my neigh- " bour's garden, the *genius loci* of his *petit* " *paradis*, is Angélique. She is much " younger than her sister. From my obser- " vations from winter to summer for the last " three years, I take it she is about the " poetic age of seventeen.

" With all the facilities of my observatory, " and the advantage of occasional expla- " natory notes from Abeille, I am extremely " puzzled by Angélique. During the past " winter, I used every evening to see her, " the very soul of gaiety, at the little " *réunions* at her father's. Her sylph-like " figure was always flitting over the floor.

" She danced with her father's old French
" friends, and frolicked with the children,
" the veriest romp and trickster among
" them. She would sow the skirts of Père
" Baillé's coat to old Eli's gown; drop
" icicles under the boys' collars, and play off
" on all, young and old, her feats of fearless
" frolic. As the spring opened, I heard her
" sweet voice outsinging the birds, her light
" heart seemed instinctively to echo their
" joyous notes; and many a time have I
" thrown down my book, and involuntarily
" responded to her merry peals of laughter.
" Soon after this there was a sudden transi-
" tion from the gay temper of the girl to the
" elaborate arts of the young lady. She
" dressed ambitiously, always with exquisite
" taste, as if she had studied her father's
" flowers for the harmony of colours, but
" with a restless vanity and expense that
" seemed the out-breaking of her West-
" India nature. A few weeks since she had
" the fever of sentiment upon her—would
" sit whole evenings by her window alone,
" and sang more plaintive ditties than I
" supposed there were in the French lan-

"guage. Now she sings nothing, gay or "sad, but sits all day over her lace without "raising her eyes. Her face is so pale "and pensive that I fancy, even at this "distance, I see the tears dropping on "her work.

"Her father called me to the fence to-day "to give me a carnation. I remarked to "him, that mademoiselle was too constantly "at her work. 'Yes,' he said, 'but she "will work and she is so *triste*, Monsieur "Roscoe. *Sacristie!* we are all *tristes*, "when Angélique will not smile.' 'Ah! "monsieur, *mon cœur pleure*.'—I felt a sort "of shivering as if a storm were gathering "over this sunny spot. Heaven grant that "this little humble *paradis* may not be "infested by evil spirits. Do not, my dear "Mrs. Layton, give the reins to your "feminine fancy. My interest in Angé-"lique is all '*en philosophe*,' or if you "please, '*en philanthrope*;' a little "softer and deeper it may be, than Eli or "even Félicité, or any less beautiful than "Angélique could excite."

" I left my letter last evening, and strolled " down to the Battery. It should have " been a moonlight night, but the clouds had " interposed, and the few loiterers that " remained there chose the broad walk at " the water's-side. I saw an acquaintance " whom I was in no humour to join, and I " retired to a more secluded walk, where I " encountered a pair who had evidently " gone thither to avoid observers, for on " seeing me approach they turned abruptly " and departed. Soon after, in going up " Broadway, I met the same couple. They " were just separating; the lady came " towards me; she was shawled and veiled, " but, as I was passing her, her veil caught " in the railing of an area, and her face was " exposed. It was, as I had conjectured, " Angélique. I walked on without seeming " to notice her, and I perceived that her " attendant had turned and was hastily " retracing his steps after her. I cast a " scrutinizing glance at him, and though his " hat was drawn close over his eyes, and he " held his handkerchief to his face, I " believed then, and still believe, he was

"*Pedrillo!* He has a certain gait and air "that cannot be mistaken, and though he "had not on the famous Spanish identifying "cloak that you used to say was managed "more gracefully than any other in Broad- "way, yet I am sure I am right in my con- "jecture. If I am, 'curse on his perjured "arts!'"

"My dear Mrs. Layton:—My letter had "swollen to such an unreasonable bulk that I "threw it aside as not worth the postage. But "some facts having come to my ear which "have made me give unwilling credence to "the possibility that you may be induced to "favor Pedrillo's suit to Emilie, I have deter- "mined to communicate certain particulars "to you, that I think will influence your opi- "nion of this gentleman.

"The evening after the encounter with "Pedrillo I have already mentioned, I was "returning late to my lodgings—there should "have been a waning moon to light the city, "but the heavens were overcast, one of the

"possible vicissitudes of weather, which, (if
"we may judge from the economy of lamp-
"oil,) is not anticipated by our corporation.
"The night was dark and drizzling. It was
"past one o'clock. I was musing on the
"profound stillness—what stillness is so elo-
"quent as that of a populous city?—and in
"part confused by the darkness, I turned
"down White instead of Walker-street. I
"did not perceive my mistake till I had made
"some progress, and then my attention was
"attracted by a carriage drawn up close to
"the flagging; the steps were down, the
"door open, and the coachman on his box.
"There was no light from the adjoining
"houses; no sound, no indication of any
"kind that a creature was awake there. I
"thought the poor devil of a coachman over-
"wearied had fallen asleep on his box, and I
"stopped with the intention of waking him,
"when I heard three low notes whistled by
"some person a few doors in advance of
"me, and directly half the blind of a parlor
"window was opened, and by the faint light
"that penetrated the misty atmosphere, I
"perceived a man's figure before the window

"of *Abeille's* house. Imperfect and varying "as the light was, I saw the person was ad-"dressing imploring and impatient gestures "to some one within. My first impulse was "that natural to a mind of common man-"liness and delicacy, to avoid any interfe-"rence with the secret purposes of another, "and I crossed the street, designing to pass "immediately down on the other side. But "as the purpose of this untimely visit flashed "upon my mind, I felt that there was some-"thing cowardly in my retreat. It might "be possible, even at this late moment, to "save the infirm Angélique (for I had truly "divined the actors in the scene) from the "power of the villain Pedrillo. I was forti-"fied in my hope when I saw Angélique, in "the act of putting her hat on her head, "throw it from her, and cautiously raise the "window-sash. She spoke to Pedrillo, but "in so low a voice that I only caught a few "words. Something she said of her mother "being sick. That she faltered in her pur-"pose of quitting the paternal roof was plain "from Pedrillo's vehement gestures, and "from the agony of indecision with which

"she paced the room, wringing her hands, "and balancing, no doubt, the pleadings of "honor and filial duty, against the passionate "persuasions of her lover.

"I too thought of poor Abeille—the fond "old father—of his '*petit paradis*,' and his "cheerful and grateful enjoyment of the wreck "of his splendid fortune, and of this his love- "liest flower trampled in the dust. Images "of the ruin and desolation that awaited "the amiable Frenchman nerved my resolu- "tion, and the possibility that I might avert "the instant danger made my heart throb "as if my own dearest treasure were in jeo- "pardy. What, thought I, ought I to do? "What can I do, to counteract one who has "so far succeeded in his purposes? I may "alarm the neighbours by my outcries, and "rouse Abeille, but the wretch will escape "with his prey, before he can be intercepted: "or, at best, Angélique will be disgraced by "the exposure of her intentions. Thus "puzzled, I ceased to measure obstacles, dis- "missed all calculations, and just followed "the impulse and guidance of my feelings. "I advanced with cautious footsteps towards

"Abeille's door-step. Pedrillo was already
"on it, and as yet unaware of my proximity.

"The light moved from the parlor, and
"flashed through the fan-light above the
"street-door. Angélique had then decided
"her fate. There was another pause in her
"movement. I was now so near to Pedrillo
"that I heard him breathe through his shut
"teeth, 'Ye furies! why does not she open
"the door?' and, as if answering to his
"words, Angélique gave audible tokens of
"her decision. The bolts were slowly with-
"drawn, the door opened, and Pedrillo
"sprang forward to receive his prize, when
"with one arm I hurled him back. I know
"not how far he fell, nor where; I had no time
"to give him one glance; with my other arm
"I had grasped Angélique, and, dragging her
"within the door, I instantly reclosed and
"rebolted it.

"I shall never forget, and I am sure I can
"never describe, Angélique's first look of
"terror, astonishment, and inquiry, and the
"overwhelming shame with which she drop-
'ped her head on her bosom, when she recog-
"nized me. Fortunately she did not speak.

"I listened intently for some indication of "our baffled knight's intentions, at this un- "expected turn in his affairs. I heard "nothing, till the sound of the retiring car- "riage-wheels proved that he had retreated. "I then graced myself with an apology to "Angélique. I am not sure that she was "not, when her first surprise was over, a "little vexed with my interference, but I "was so fortunate as to give a better direc- "tion to her feelings, and without preaching "about her duties, or dictating them, I set "before her such a picture of her fond old "father, that her tender heart returned to "its loyalty to him, to duty, and to happi- "ness; and, shuddering at the precipice "from which she had escaped, she most "solemnly vowed for ever to renounce, and "shun Pedrillo.

"That it is better to save than to destroy, "no one will dispute. I believe it is easier— "far easier to persuade the infirm to virtue "than to vice. There is an unbroken chord "in every human heart, that vibrates to "the voice of truth. There is there an un- "dying spark from the altar of God, that

" may be kindled to a flame by the breath
" of virtue. If we felt this truth more
" deeply, we should not be so reckless of
" the happiness of our fellow-beings, and
" so negligent of any means we may possess
" of cherishing and stimulating their virtue.

" I did not embarrass Angélique with my
" presence one moment after I was assured
" that her right resolution was fixed; but
" I hesitated whether to retire through
" Abeille's yard to my lodgings, or to go
" into the street, where Pedrillo might pos-
" sibly still be lurking. I wished that, if
" possible, he should think Angélique had
" been rescued by some one who had a
" natural right to interpose in her behalf.
" But as I thought there was little chance
" of encountering him, and as I had knocked
" off my hat in entering the house, I with-
" drew that way in the hope of finding it.
" I did not; and I have since suspected
" that Pedrillo ascertained my name from
" it, for I have met him once since, and
" I thought his face flushed, and his brow
" lowered, as he passed me.

" Now, my dear Mrs. Layton, have I not,

"by giving you a true account of the sober
"part I played in this little drama, proved
"to you my disbelief in the slander that
"claims the paramount favour of your sex
"for men *à bonnes fortunes?* However,
"to confess the truth, my motive in the
"communication was quite foreign to my-
"self; but I must indulge my egotism, by
"relating my own part in the characteristic
"finishing of the tale. Old Abeille came
"to my room this morning, with a note from
"Angélique. She informed me that her
"poor mother had just died; that she had
"bestowed 'such praise!' on her when she
"gave her her last blessing. 'The praise,'
"she said, 'she had not deserved by her
"virtue, she would by her penitence—and
"she had fallen on her knees and confessed
"all to her mother; and her mother had
"then blessed her more fervently than ever,
"and blessed Monsieur Roscoe, both in one
"breath. And if the prayer of the dying
"was heard,' adds Angélique, 'no trouble
"nor sin will ever come nigh to Monsieur
"Roscoe, nor to any thing Monsieur loves.'
"Her note concludes with the information

" that she is going to the convent at Balti-
" more, ' to pray to God and make penitence
" *for a little while.*' It was evident the
" old man had a burden on his heart that
" could only be relieved by words; but
" there are feelings of a nature and force
" to check the fluency even of a French-
" man; and Abeille was mute, save in the
" eloquence of tears. He took out his snuff-
" box, which serves him on all occasions
" as a link to mend the broken chain of his
" ideas! but now it would not do. I had
" not yet read Angélique's note, and I
" naturally referred his emotion to the death
" of his wife, to which I adverted in a tone
" of condolence. ' Ah, 'tis not that, Mon-
" sieur Roscoe,' he said, ' *il faut mourir*—
" and my wife—*pauvre femme!*—was good
" to die. *Certainement c'est un grand*
" *malheur;* but every body can speak of
" his wife's death—but, *sacristie!* when I
" think of *that*, my tongue will not move,
" though my heart is full of gratitude to
" you, Monsieur Roscoe. Ah, you have
" saved us all, *et de quelle horreur!*' Here
" Abeille burst into a fresh flood of tears,

" and again had recourse to his snuff-box. " I could no longer appear ignorant of his " meaning. 'My good friend,' said I, 'I " understand you perfectly; but this is not " a subject to talk about. Let me only say " to you, that Angélique was even more " ready to spring from the toils than I was " to extricate her.' '*Ah, Dieu soit béni*— " *véritablement—elle est un ange.* Ah, " Monsieur Roscoe, you have said that good " word of *ma pètite, pour m'encourager.* " *Vous savez,*' he continued, for now he had " recovered all his volubility, '*vous savez* " *qu'elle est belle—la reine de toutes mes* " *fleurs—ah! n'est-ce pas, Monsieur?*—and " she is always so *douce et gaie—si gaie*— " *toujours—toujours.*—And now, Monsieur " Roscoe, we must speak English; *that* " always have a very plain meaning. My " claim on my country is partly allowed, " and I have received fifty thousand francs. " Now I do not want this money; I am " very happy, and my poor girl shall have " it all—ten thousand dollars—and when " she has made her penitence, you shall " have her hand, Monsieur Roscoe, and all

" the money in it. Ah, do not speak—*vous*
" *le méritez.*'

" I certainly was not prepared to reply
" to so unexpected an expression of Abeille's
" gratitude. However, I had frankness
" enough to say that marriage must be an
" affair of the heart entirely. 'You,' said
" I, 'my friend Abeille, cannot answer for
" Angélique at the end of a twelvemonth,
" nor can I foresee in what disposition I
" shall then find myself.' 'Ah but,' inter-
" rupted Abeille, 'we will shorten Angé-
" lique's retirement to a few weeks—*elle*
" *est si jeune—il ne faut pas penser et prier*
" *Dieu* too long.' I was driven to an eva-
" sion; for I have too much chivalry in-
" terwoven in the very web of my nature
" to reject a 'fair ladye' in plain terms;
" and I said, scarcely controlling a smile at
" the resemblance of my reply to the for-
" mula of a docile miss, at her first offer;
" I said that my mother felt on these sub-
" jects quite '*en Américaine*,'—that she
" had her prejudices, and I feared it would
" break her heart if I married any other
" than one of my own countrywomen, and

"therefore, I must not admit the thought "of aspiring to the hand of Mademoiselle "Angélique.

"*Est-il possible,*' cried Abéille, '*qu'une* "*femme raisonnable, peut être capable de* "*telles sottises? Pauvre garçon!*' (this was "spoken in a tone of deep consideration,) "I pray the *bon Dieu* will reward your "filial piety; but where will madame find "*une Américaine comparable à mon Angé-* "*lique? Toujours, toujours* you shall be "*mon fils,* if you cannot be the *mari* of "my *belle* Angélique!' *Eh bien!—chacun* "*à son goût—mais, une Américaine pré-* "*férable à mon Angélique?*' The old "man took a double pinch of snuff. "Adieu, Monsieur Roscoe; you will come "to the *cathédrale* to hear the *miserere* "chaunted for poor Madame Abeille.' I "assured him I would do so, and thereupon "we parted.

"My dear Mrs. Layton, allow me the "happiness of soon hearing from your own "lips, or your own pen, that Señor "Pedrillo's suit has met its merited fate.

"And in the meantime, believe me, as ever,

"Your devoted friend and servant,

"GERALD ROSCOE."

Roscoe was right in his conjecture that Pedrillo had ascertained who had intercepted his success. When he rose from the prostrate position in the middle of the street where Roscoe had thrown him, he stumbled over a hat. He perceived that the noise at Abeille's door had attracted the observation of one of the guardians of the night, and he thought proper to retreat. He took the hat with him, and, when he exposed it to the light, he found within it the name that of all others was most likely to give a keen edge to his resentment. He had met Roscoe often at Mrs. Layton's, and had some corresponding suspicions that Emilie's indifference to his addresses proceeded from preference to Roscoe. He tore off the name, and threw the hat into the street, saying as he did so, "I have found out the *object*, and I will make the *opportunity* of revenge."

It must be confessed there is a charm, to our republican society, in a foreign name and aristocratic pretensions, like the fascinations of a fairy tale to children. Our tastes are yet governed by ancient *prestiges*—cast in the old mould. We profess the generous principle that each individual has a right to his own eminence, whether his sires commanded the heights, or drudged obscurely in the humblest vale of life; but artificial distinctions still influence our imaginations, and the spell has not been dissolved by the repeated detection of the pretensions of impostors with foreign manners, and high-sounding titles, who have obtained the *entrée* of our fashionable circles.

Henriques Pedrillo had far more plausible claims to favour than certain other vagrant foreigners who have played among us too absurd and notorious a part to be yet forgotten. He had in the first place 'nature's aristocracy,' a person and face of uncommon symmetry and elegance, and these advantages he cherished and set off with consummate art, steering a middle course between coxcombry and negligence, the Scylla and

Charybdis of the gentleman's toilette. His conversation did not indicate any more erudition than he might have imbibed at the playhouse, and by a moderate intercourse with cultivated society. He spoke English, French, and Spanish equally well, and so well as to leave his hearer in doubt which was his vernacular; and he had the insinuating address—the devotion of look and manner, in his intercourse with ladies, that marks the exotic in America. In common with most Spaniards who come among us, he cast his nativity in old Castile, though he confessed he had been driven to the new world to repair the abated fortunes of his ancient family. He was not precise in communicating the particulars of his career; but the grand circumstance of success, if it did not extinguish curiosity, at least repressed its expression. He had been recently known to some of our first merchants, as the principal in a rich house in the Havannah. This was enough to satisfy the slight scrupulosity Jasper Layton might have felt in introducing him to his wife and daughter. Mrs. Layton at first courted Pedrillo merely

as a brilliant acquisition to her *coterie*. She confessed she had no affinities for American character—tame, unexcitable, and unadorned as she deemed it. She spoke French and Spanish remarkably well, and the desire to demonstrate these accomplishments did not betray a very culpable vanity. She first sedulously cultivated Pedrillo's acquaintance; 'Eve did first eat;' but Mrs. Layton, no more than our first mother, foresaw the fatal consequences of what appeared a trivial act. Their relations soon became interesting and complicated. Pedrillo was captivated by Emilie's pre-eminent beauty. Her innocence and sweetness touched all that remained of unextinguished goodness in his nature. The evil spirits look back with lingering affection to the heaven they have forfeited.

Layton, a man of lavish expense, found Pedrillo a most convenient friend. Pedrillo was profuse, but not careless. He had the acute habits of a man of business, and even in his pleasures he nicely balanced the amount he gave against the consideration he expected to receive. When, therefore, he

from time to time lent Jasper Layton large sums of money, he gloried in the secret consciousness of the power he was accumulating. Their intimacy grew till Layton gave him the last proof of his confidence and good-fellowship, by introducing him to a club of gentlemen who met privately every night at a gambling-house, and indulged there to great excess this keen and destructive passion.

Pedrillo had acquired in scenes of stirring excitement and imminent peril such command over his turbulent passions, that, to the eye of an observer, the fire that was merely covered, seemed extinguished. So at least it appeared to Layton, when after a night of various fortune and feverish excitement, they emerged from their club-room, just as the city lamps were dimmed by the approaching day. "Pedrillo, my dear fellow," said Layton, "You are quite a philosopher: you win and lose with equal *nonchalance*—I—I confess it—I am giddy with my unexpected luck."

"*Unexpected?*" replied Pedrillo.

"Yes, unhoped for; Pedrillo, I will tell

you a secret. When I entered that room to-night, I was utterly ruined."

"A secret!—ha! ha!"

"A secret—yes, *you* might have guessed it, for God knows you were deeply concerned in it—but all scores are wiped out now, eh, Pedrillo? That last bragger cleared off the last five thousand—and my loss to that devilish fellow Martin, that is balanced too; thank Heaven I am my own man again; a timely whirl of the wheel it was. Fortune, blind goddess as thou art, I still will worship thee!"

"Do we visit her temple to-morrow night?"

"Certainly."

"*Au revoir*, then." They parted; Layton went one way, intoxicated with success, humming glees and catches, now twisting his cane around his fingers, now striking it on the pavement, and even attracting the eye of the drowsy watchmen by his irregular movements. His spirits would have fled if he had penetrated Pedrillo's bosom, and seen the keen, vigilant suspicion he had awakened there.

The next night they met again at the gaming-table. Fortune maintained her perch on Layton's cards; Pedrillo lost large sums. Again they left the house together. Pedrillo appeared even more unmoved than he had on the preceding night. He congratulated Layton with as much seeming unconcern as if the subject in question were a mercantile speculation in which he had no personal concern. Layton was in ecstacies—"You may defy the world, Pedrillo!" he said in a tone of the highest good humour, "and all its turns, tricks, and shufflings. Those poor devils we have left behind us are ready to cut their own throats, or mine. Zounds! my dear fellow, you are high-souled and whole-souled—"

"Have you heard from Miss Emilie to-day?" asked Pedrillo, rather abruptly interrupting his companion's strain of lavish compliment.

"Yes."

"Does she permit me to follow her?"

Layton's elated tone was changed to one more conciliatory, as he replied, "Why, to tell you the truth, Pedrillo, she seems disin-

clined; and on the whole we may as well consider the affair as ended."

"*When* did you come to that conclusion, sir?"

"When? what difference does that make, if it be a wise conclusion?"

"Do we meet to-morrow night?"

"As you please; after my run of luck, it does not become me to propose it."

"We meet then; and *after* we will speak of Miss Emilie."

"*Eh bien;* but of course Pedrillo, you understand that I shall never consent to put any force on her inclinations."

"You shall do as you choose"—and he added mentally, "*shall choose* it, Jasper Layton, as surely as a man chooses life rather than death."

The next evening found them at their accustomed haunt. After Pedrillo and Layton had played one game, Pedrillo threw up the cards, alleging a pain and dizziness in his head. Another took his place. He continued to stride up and down the room, sometimes pausing beside Layton, and always keeping his eye fixed on him. Layton had a

dim consciousness, as some sensitive persons have in their sleep, of a steady gaze, and once or twice he looked up, startled and inquiring, but instantly his attention reverted to the portentous interests of the game. From time to time angry and half-smothered exclamations broke from his companions, at his obstinate luck ; still they continued with fatal desperation to wager and lose, and, when the play was finished, they had lost, and Layton had won all. Accustomed as they were to sudden and violent fluctuations of fortune, their continued losses on the present occasion had exhausted their patience, and deprived them of the power of quelling the expression of their excited passions. Despair, madness, and worse than all, suspicion, burst forth in loud imprecations, or in half-audible murmurs. Layton's cheek burnt, and his hand trembled, with triumph, or resentment, or consciousness, but he uttered not one word ; and when, as they left the apartment, he, as usual, thrust his arm into Pedrillo's, Pedrillo withdrew from him, and fixed on him a cold penetrating glance that thrilled

through his soul. He involuntarily shivered —they emerged from the long dark passage, that led from their secret haunt to the street, into a damp, hot, steaming atmosphere. " A singular morning for agues!" said Pedrillo, looking contemptuously at Layton, while he took off his own hat and fanned himself, as if to stir some living principle in the suffocating air. Layton turned his eye timidly to Pedrillo; their glances met—a keen intelligence, a malignant triumph, and pitiless contempt, spoke in Pedrillo's; the shame, and fear, and misery of detected villainy, in Layton's. They walked on in silence to the head of the street, where, instead of parting as usual, Pedrillo drew nearer to Layton, took his arm, and went on with him. " A word to the wise," he said, in a low thrilling voice, " a word to the wise, for wise I think you will be after this folly—the ass should not attempt a cheat in the presence of the fox. Layton, I suspected your trick the first night —the second my suspicions were confirmed —to-night I have detected you. Let this pass. You have been rash—imprudent in

your practice, my good friend; you should have calculated more nicely the chances of detection. Other suspicions than mine are awakened, but there is an immeasurable distance between suspicion and certainty, and we may continue to widen that distance; that is, if,"—and, as he finished his sentence, every word seemed measured and weighed, and sunk like lead into Layton's heart,—" if in future we are friends?"

The tone was interrogative, and Layton replied gaspingly, "Certainly, certainly."

"Well, very well; we understand each other, do we not?"

"Yes, yes, perfectly."

"Then let that pass—'*Il ne faut pas être plus sage qu'il ne faut*'—details are disagreeable, and you are sure, quite sure there is a clear mutual comprehension?"

Layton felt at every word as if a new manacle were rivetted on him. Still, safety on any terms were better than destruction, and while he writhed under the power, he dared not resist: "Proceed," he cried, "for God's sake—you know I understand you."

"Then, Layton," he resumed in a familiar, every-day tone of voice, "my lips are sealed:—as to the few thousands you have won from me, retain them, as a consideration in part for the treasure you ensure me—*ensure* me, mark my words; and, Layton, if in future you get becalmed, do not attempt to raise the wind by such desperate expedients. There are a few situations in life where honesty *is* the best policy, and the gaming-table is one of them. But before we part, let us settle our plan of action. Suspicion is awake, go again to-morrow night, and lose your winnings liberally! this will baffle their sagacity, and what is more, appease their resentment. Do you like my counsel?"

"I will take it."

"Good night then, or rather good morning, for I think the sun is glimmering through the scalding fog." They parted, and Layton sprang on his own door-step, as a newly-captured slave would dart from the presence of his master. "One word," said Pedrillo, turning back, "you write to Miss Emilie to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, I will communicate my determination to her."

"Oh, 'of course,'" replied Pedrillo, with a 'laughing devil in his eye,' and quoting Layton's last words of the preceding evening, "'of course you will put no force on her inclinations.'" An oath rose to Layton's lips, but he suppressed all expression till, secure from observation in his own room, he gave vent to a burst of passion; but resentment, remorse, and parental tenderness, were now alike unavailing. He was inextricably involved with Pedrillo, and his own safety could only be secured by the sacrifice of his beautiful child.

Jasper Layton was the only son of a man of talent, virtue, and fortune, and he never quite lost the sense of the responsibility such an inheritance involved; and, to the last, the fear of publicly disgracing his honorable name, was a source of the keenest suffering to him. Unfortunately he came into possession, by his father's death, of a large fortune, before he had sufficient strength of principle, or habit, to encounter its temptations. He was not destitute of kind,

or even tender affections; but what good thing thrives without culture? and frivolous pursuits and selfish indulgences had rendered his feelings callous. Still, they had not perished, and it was after many heart-writhings, and after a long interview with Pedrillo on the subsequent morning, that he wrote the following letter to his wife—to a wife who, if she had rightly employed her superior powers, might have saved him from the wreck of virtue and happiness.

" Madam—I enclose you a remittance, " according to the *conjugal* request you did " me the honour to transmit through Gerald " Roscoe, Esq.; and, at the same time, I " take the liberty to forewarn you, that " unless you second—energetically second " my views and wishes in the —— affair, " I shall lose the ability, as I have long " ago lost the inclination, to answer the " demands arising from your habits of reck- " less expense. I expect you to be at " Trenton by the first of next month. Pe- " drillo will follow you thither; and there, " or at Utica (he leaves all minor points to

" her decision) he expects to receive Emilie's
" hand. He loves Emilie—upon my soul I
" believe he does—devotedly.

" God knows I have taken every care of
" her happiness in my arrangements with
" P——. He has made a magnificent set-
" tlement on her, and promises never, but
" with her consent, to take her to Cuba.
" Do not moralize (it is not your forte)
" about P.'s foibles. I know the world; we
" must take our choice between unmasked
" frailty, and hypocrisy. I, for one, prefer
" the former. P.'s liberality covers a mul-
" titude of sins. Women *must* be married.
" Emilie, poor girl, will not, it is true,
" marry for love; but *we* married for love!
" and what has come of it? ha! ha! It is
" well enough for boys and girls to dream
" about, and novelists to string their stories
" on; but you and I know it is all cursed
" dupery. All that can be *secured* in ma-
" trimonial life is pecuniary independence.
" To this I have attended with parental
" fidelity.

" You must do your part; your influence
" over E. is unbounded; and if you choose

" to exercise it, you can *incline* her (force " is, of course, out of the question) to do " that, on which, let me tell you, madam, " your, as well as my, happiness—happi- " ness! *existence* depends. We are ruined, " *dishonored*, if this affair is not brought to " a fortunate conclusion. I tell you this, " because it is necessary you should know " the worst, to second me as you should; " but make no unessential communications " to poor E. God preserve that cheek from " shame that has never been dyed but with " the pure blush of innocence!

" Do your part, I beseech you, and do it " well and effectually; you *can* act like a " woman of sense. But I am urging where " I should command. Remember you have " other children, and will have future wants. " Can you look poverty and disgrace in the " face? If not, you know the alternative.

" Your's, &c.

" JASPER LAYTON."

While the episode in Pedrillo's life, related in Roscoe's letter, and the transactions of the gaming-house were passing in New

York, Gertrude Clarence was enjoying an almost daily interchange of visits with her new friends, and an acquaintance that promised nothing but happiness was ripening into intimacy. Mrs. Layton found herself compelled by the receipt of her husband's letter suddenly to suspend this intercourse, and she despatched the following note to Gertrude, in which, as will be seen, she did not hint at the place of her destination after she left Upton's-purchase. She had her reasons for this reserve. She feared that Mrs. Upton would propose to accompany her, as a ride to Trenton from her residence was a convenient and tempting jaunt of pleasure; and she meant that her going thither should appear to have been the consequence of a subsequent arrangement.

"It is with inexpressible sorrow, my "sweetest friend, that I am compelled to "bid you adieu without again seeing you. "We take our departure early in the morn-"ing. Poor Em' is quite heart-broken "about it. We are both under the tyranny

" of destiny. I resign all to the despot,
" save my affections; and of those, you,
" dearest, have taken complete possession.
" It is not because you are a heroine of the
" nineteenth century; that is, practical, ra-
" tional, dutiful, and all the tedious *et*
" *ceteras*,—that I admire you. No, these are
" qualities that, like bread and water, are
" the gross elements of every-day life, but
" they have nothing to do with that fine
" accord of finely touched spirits that com-
" mon minds can no more attain than com-
" mon senses can take in the music of the
" spheres. There is no describing it, but
" we understand it; do we not? Dear
" Gertrude, you must be my friend; you
" must love me; you will have much to for-
" give in me. I am a wayward creature.
" Oh, heavens! how inferior to you! but
" there have been crosses in my destiny.
" Had I known you sooner, your bland in-
" fluence would have given a different colour
" to my life. You understand me. I dis-
" dain the Procrustes standard of pattern
" ladies, who admit none to the heaven of
" their favour, but those who can walk on a

" mathematical line, like that along which a " Mahometan passes to his paradise.

" My best regards to your father. I wish " he could have looked into my heart and " seen how I was charmed with his manners " to you; the chivalric tenderness of the " lover mingling with the calm sentiment of " the father. Would that poor Em' had " ——— but on certain subjects unhappy " woman is forbidden to speak. To you, " my loveliest friend, a husband would be a " superfluity—at present. But to poor Em,' " how necessary! You *must* come to us this " winter. I shall make a formal attack on " your father to that effect. I shall bring " out all the arts of diplomacy; but I shall " need no arts. I have good sense on my " side, and 'good sense' is the oracle of every " man past forty. Clarenceville is, I allow, " in the summer, a most delicious residence, " the favoured haunt, the home of the genius " of mountain and lake; but in winter, when " the grass withers, the leaves fall, the run- " ning stream runs no longer, and the winds " are howling through these sublime forests, " (a nervous sound of a dark day or cloudy

" night,) then come to the luxuries of civiliza-
" tion in town. Man was not made to con-
" tend alone with nature; and, with honest
" Touchstone, I confess that the country 'in
" respect it is in the green fields, is plea-
" sant; but (at all seasons) in respect it is
" far from court, it is tedious.' But pardon
" me, I had forgotten this was a note. One
" is so beguiled into forgetfulness of every
" thing else when communing with you,
" dearest! Emilie begs me to say farewell
" for her."—Here followed half a dozen lines so carefully effaced, that the keenest curiosity could not discover a word. The note proceeded: "These crossed lines prove how
" involuntarily my heart flows out to you—
" how unwillingly it bears the cold restraint
" of prudence; but, after a few days, such
" restrictions will be unnecessary. Till then,
" believe me, dear Gertrude,

" Yours, most truly,

" GRACE LAYTON."

" N.B. My mind was so engaged with
" matters of deeper interest that I forgot to
" mention the total wreck of poor Upton's
" expectations of making a family piece in

" an English book. She has exhausted her " hospitalities on this son of an English " baronet, in the hope of seeing herself and " the Judge, and all the little Uptons in " print, when lo! she has found this morn- " ing, in the course of one of her housewife " explorations, a leaf from the traveller's " note-book. I can stop to give you but a " few specimens from the memorandum. I " am vexed at the fellow's impertinence " towards you; but you are a *femme raison-* " *nable*, and know that fortune must be thus " taxed. 'Mem. Upton's purchase, resi- " dence of a country justice—convenient vi- " cinity to some celebrated lake-scenery— " staid here on that account. American " scenery quite savage—Justice U. an abyss " of ignorance—wife, a mighty vulgar little " person—children, pests—no *servants*—two " *helps*. Dined at Clarenceville. The C.s " great people in America—giants in Lilliput! " —Amer[n] table barbarisms—porter and " salad with meats! peas with currie!—no " poultry—no butcher's meat. Query, do " the inferior animals as well as man uni- " formly degenerate, and become scarce in

"America? Miss C. an only daughter, a
"prodigious fortune—pretty good air too—
"do very well *caught young*—but can't go
"again. Devilish pretty girl here—mother
"a knowing one.'—You see, dear Gertrude,
"we have all a part in these precious notes.
"Poor little Upton half cried as she read them.
"We are philosophers, and may laugh.
"Again, and at each moment more tenderly,

"Yours, G. L."

"One more nota bene, and I have done.
"I have just received a folio from Gerald
"Roscoe—Oh! what a lover he will be!
"how I could have loved such a man! Who
"is it that says (too truly!) that 'la puis-
"sance d'aimer est trop grande; elle l'est trop
"dans les âmes ardentes!'

"Farewell, dearest.

"G. L."

Gertrude wondered that Mrs. Layton should be so reserved about Emilie's affairs, when she manifested such singular confidence and unbounded tenderness; for, measuring her new friend by her own purity and truth, she gave full credit to all her expressions.

Contrasted with the simple regard and unexaggerated language of Gertrude's common acquaintance, they were like the luscious fruits of the tropics, as compared with our cold northern productions.

But she had now no time to analyze her fascinating friend. The jaunt to Trenton, to which her father had at once consented, on Seton's account had been delayed from day to day, for two weeks, from the daily occurrence of the rural affairs of midsummer, that seem to country gentlemen, of the first importance. In the meanwhile, Seton was becoming worse. The family physician announced the approach of a nervous fever, that could only be averted by change of air; and Mr. Clarence put aside every other concern; and, on the very day of Mrs. Layton's departure, he set off with Gertrude and Seton, and servants competent to the care of the invalid, in case he failed to derive the benefit they hoped from the journey. Mr. Clarence was usually particularly annoyed by the discomforts of travelling; his philosophy completely subdued by bad roads, bad coffee, bad bread, and worst and chiefest of

all plagues, by the piratical 'red rovers' that 'murder sleep;' but his benevolence now got the better of the habits generated by ill health and indulgence—he thought, and cared only for Seton.

"If the unhappy patient's malady had been within the reach of art, it must have been subdued by Gertrude's ministration; for, with that exquisite sensibility, which vibrates to every motion of another's spirit, she watched all the variations of his mind, and imparted or withheld the sunshine of her own, as best suited his humor; but, in spite of skill and patience, and sisterly vigilance, the nervous fever predicted by the physician made hourly encroachments; and the necessity of a few hours' delay at one of the noisiest inns of that noisiest of all *growing* towns, thronged, busy Utica, exasperated the disease to an alarming degree.

As may be supposed, Mr. Clarence had not come to the most public hotel of a town, abounding in every species and grade of receptacle for travellers, till he had unsuccessfully applied for admittance to the other more private, but now overflowing houses.

The travellers, on alighting, were shown into the common receiving parlor, a large apartment opening into the public hall, and near the general entrance door. Mr. Clarence, after vainly attempting to obtain audience of the official departments of the house, and after a fruitless quest for some private and unoccupied apartment, was compelled to content himself with securing the exclusive possession of a settee, which had the advantage of a position removed as far as the dimensions of the apartment admitted, from either of the general passage doors, through which the full tide of human existence ebbed and flowed. Here he, Gertrude, and Seton, seated themselves; and here they might for a little time, but for poor Seton, have been well enough amused with the contrast to the seclusion, quiet, and elegance of their home.

The front windows of the apartment looked into the most public, and *par excellence* the busiest street of the town—the avenue to the great northern turn-pike. Stage-coaches were waiting, arriving, departing, driving to and fro, as if all the world were a stage-

coach, and all the men and women merely travellers.

The 'window privilege' (as our New-England friends would say) at the side of the room, was no way inferior to that in front. This afforded a view of the canal, and of the general debouching place of its packet-boats: —all elements are here tributary to the *forwarding* system.

There were servants and porters hustling baggage off and on the boats—stage-coach proprietors persecuting the jaded passengers with rival claims to patronage—agents clothed in official importance—idlers, for even here are idlers, and all 'as their tempers were,' muttering, sneering, scolding, joking, laughing, or silently submitting to their fate. The way-worn, weary travellers, as they poured into the hotel, seemed the victims, instead of the authors, of this hurly-burly.

A female, with a highly decorated pongee riding dress, gaudy ear-rings, a watch at her side, with half a dozen seals, and a gold safety chain, as big as a cable, around her neck—in short, with the aspect of a half gentlewoman, seated herself beside Miss Clarence, and

very unceremoniously began a conversation with her. "Are you going on in the pioneer-line, Ma'am?" "No." "Oh, in the telegraph—so are we, it is much more select; but I tell my husband, that all the stages are too levelling to suit me"—A pause ensued, and soon after the lady beckoned to her husband. "My dear, who is that foreign looking gentleman, that says he is going on in the pioneer-line?" "The Duke of Montebello!" The lady looked all aghast at the untimely discovery, that levels might be raised as well as lowered in a stage-coach.

The only apparently quite cool member of this bustling community, was a ruddy-faced, tight-built, active little man, not far declined from his meridian, who was walking in and out, and up and down the room, addressing the individuals of this motley crowd, with the easy air of a citizen of the world. He approached Mr. Clarence, and by way of an introductory salutation observed, that it was a 'warmish day.' The mercury stood at ninety, and Mr. Clarence's blood at fever heat.

"Intensely hot," he replied, without turning his head or moving his eye from the ark-

like boats, which were gliding under the bridge that crossed the canal.

"A pretty sight that!" continued the good-natured man, "especially, to one who, like myself, has travelled through this town many and many a day, in fair weather and foul, with the mail on my back.

"You, my friend! you do not look older than myself!"

I think I have some dozen years the advantage of you, sir; but I have led a stirring kind of a life and kept my blood warm, and courage up. Yes, sir, just where the grand *canaul* goes, I used to whistle along a foot-path; and here, where the folks are now as thick as blades of grass in June, stood my log-house; and my wife, and four flax-headed little boys, were all the inhabitants. I love to look back upon those times, though I have now seventy drivers in my employ; but we grow with the country, and get to be gentlemen before we know it; excuse me, Sir, my coaches are getting under way."

A fresh bustle now broke out; Babel was nothing to it; for no post-coaches stood at its devoted doors. "Hurra for the western

passengers!" Gentlemen and ladies for Sacket's harbor—all ready!" "Hurra for Trenton." "Pioneer-line ready. "Gentlemen and ladies for the Telegraph!" "The bell is ringing for the Adams boat—going out!" "Horn blowing for the Jackson—coming in."

Where was poor Seton, and his nerves, in this *mêlée.* "It will certainly kill him," thought Gertrude, and calling to a black fellow, who was hurrying hither and thither, as if he were the ruling spirit of the scene; "my good friend," she said, imploringly, "cannot you get a private room, for that sick gentleman?"

Blackey grinned from ear to ear; "Missess can't suspecta privateroom in a public-house."

Happily, his reply, half impudent, and half simple, caught the ear of our friend, the some-time mail-bearer; who ordered the servant, instantly, to find private apartments, and accompanied his command with such demonstrations of his having 'come to be a gentleman,' as none may give, in our country, but those who have *worked* their passage to that elevation; and none will receive, but those whose colour stamps

their subordination. When blackey had recovered from the impetus, that had hurled him from one extremity of the room to the other, his chastiser ordered him to show the lady to the square room; and said, he would himself conduct the gentlemen to the best apartments the house afforded. Most gratefully did they all follow, blessing the timely interposition of the bustling little man in authority.

Miss Clarence took possession of her apartment, opened the sashes, closed the blinds, and was just throwing herself upon the bed, when a horribly scrawled half-sheet of paper caught her eye. She picked it up, and taking it for granted that it was some discarded scrawl, and without once doubting, whether it were proper to read it, and having nothing else to do, she began it; and once begun, it was read, and re-read. There was no address, no signature; it was not folded, or finished. It ran thus:

"You will be surprised at this addendum to
" the folio I have just despatched; if, indeed,
" you can decipher it, written, as it must
" be, with a bar-room pen, and diluted ink.

" Since I put that in the P. Office, I have
" had positive information—there is no
" longer any doubt remaining. The poor
" girl is passive, and P.—is to follow them
" to Trenton. What horrible infatuation!
" You may think me as infatuated to hope
" to prevent it; but I cannot look on, and
" see a creature so young, so innocent, and
" so lovely, on the brink of a precipice, and
" not stretch out my arm to rescue her from
" destruction. I will communicate the ter-
" rible suspicions that are abroad; if my
" efforts are abortive, why, I shall have
" made them, and that will be some conso-
" lation. I think if I see ——, I can
" dissipate her delusion; if, indeed, it be
" delusion; but if, as I rather think, it is a
" timid submission to tyranny, I shall try
" to rouse her courage to rebellion. This
" crusade, of course, prevents me paying my
" respects at Clarenceville; I understand
" there are troops of pilgrims to that shrine.
" Let them bow before the golden idol—I
" reserve my worship for the image to be set
" up in my heart. Report says that Miss

Here the letter had been interrupted, and as Gertrude hoped, unintentionally left, for she could not believe that a person who could indite a decent epistle would expose such allusions to public inspection. 'Who could have written it?' She ran over the catalogue of her own, and her father's acquaintance. No one appeared as the probable writer. She thought of Gerald Roscoe, but she was familiar with his autograph, and, 'thank heaven, it was not he,' she ejaculated audibly, and smiled involuntarily at the sensation of escape she derived from this assurance. 'Why was it she had rather it had been any other man living than Gerald Roscoe?' Before she had given this self-interrogation fair hearing, and while she was folding the manuscript with the intention of showing it to her father, she heard a tap at the door, and the voice of the negro-servant, saying, 'Won't missess please to hand me a written letter, lying on the table under a handkerchief, and won't missess please to keep the handkerchief tight over it, *case* the gentleman's very *pa'tic'lar* not to have me, nor nobody read it?"

She looked around the room, saw a cambric handkerchief, not far from the place where she had found the letter, and scrupulously covered it; but she did not transfer it to the servant till (as every woman will believe) she had vainly investigated every corner for a mark. She was gratified with this indirect assurance that the exposure of the letter had been accidental and limited to herself, and probably owing to the draft of wind occasioned by her throwing open the window when she entered the apartment.

But what could console the high-minded Gertrude Clarence for the conviction that continually pressed on her from every quarter, and in every form, that the accident of fortune, a distinction that she had never sought, and never valued, exposed her to slights and ridicule; to be dreaded and avoided by one class, courted and flattered by another? She thought of Seton, and it cannot be questioned that she felt a glow of satisfaction that she had excited one pure, disinterested sentiment; and a secret regret that affection was in its nature so independent and inflexible, that, though she

would, she could not love him who so well deserved her love. Then came the bitterest reflection of all; her fortune had envenomed the shaft that wounded Seton's peace.

What would become of envy and covetousness, and all their train of discontent, evil, and sin, if the external veil were lifted, and the eye could penetrate the secrets of the heart?

Miss Clarence was roused from a long reverie to which we have merely given the clue, by a notice that Mr. Seton was so much refreshed as to be able to proceed on his journey.

Nothing can be more beautiful, more soothing and refreshing, than the coming on of evening after the fierce heat of one of our midsummer days. It is a compensation for the languor and exhaustion of mid-day—or rather it is the best preparation for the full and exquisite enjoyment of the delicious coolness, the deepening shadows, and the fragrance that exhales from woods, flowers, and fields. A summer's evening in the country is a paradise regained; but, alas! evil spirits could leap the bounds of paradise;

and melancholy interposed her black pall between poor Seton and the outward world. In vain did Gertrude point out the rich hills and valleys of Oneida—the almost boundless view of a country so recently redeemed from savages and savage wildness, and now rich, populous, and cultivated. He scarcely raised his heavy eye-lids; and his faint and irrelevant replies indicated that his brain was already touched by his disease.

All other interest was now lost in anxiety to reach Trenton; and after as rapid a drive as roads, at their best indifferent, would permit, they arrived at the 'rural resort,' the neat inn in the vicinity of the falls. Fortunately there were no visitors there at the moment of our travellers' arrival, and they had an opportunity of selecting their apartments, and for Seton, the most retired and commodious one the house afforded, to which he was borne in the arms of his attendants.

The consciousness of sacrificing one's private inclinations and comforts for the good of another is always pleasant to a benevolent mind; and Mr. Clarence, whom nothing but an errand of kindness would have tempted

from his home to a gathering-place, was in unexpected good spirits. He already 'felt quite renewed by his journey.' 'Gertrude looked better than he had seen her for six months.' 'He was sure Louis wanted nothing but a little rest.' He was delighted with the deep retirement and *ruralities* of the situation, and 'charmed with the neatness, civility, and quiet of the house.' The last quality was not of long duration. One or two stage-coaches arrived, and the consequent and inevitable bustle ensued. The guests were judiciously disposed in a part of the house as remote as possible from that occupied by Mr. Clarence; and Gertrude passed the evening in her father's apartment, reading aloud to him, according to her usual custom. The lecture was of course interrupted by Mr. Clarence' frequent visits to Seton's room. His mind was still wandering, and his fever increasing; but after a while, a powerful opiate took effect, and he sank into an unquiet, artificial sleep. His attendant, however, reported that he was doing well, and Gertrude, after giving her

last minute directions, bade her father 'good night.'

As she shut the door of his apartment, her book in one hand, and lamp in the other, her foot was entangled in the cloak of a gentleman who was standing muffled in the little gallery. In extricating herself from the awkward embarrassment, her lamp fell. The gentleman recovered it, and, gracefully apologizing for the accident, he relighted the lamp by the lantern suspended in the gallery. This was an operose business. The cloak encumbered him, he threw it aside, and Gertrude could not but notice, with a curiosity stimulated by the concealment for which the cloak had obviously been worn—for nothing could be more agreeably tempered than the atmosphere—the fine figure and classic head thus accidentally and unintentionally disclosed. Every one knows how slow and almost impossible the process of ignition appears when waited for. The gentleman made some common-place, but, as Gertrude thought, pleasant remark about it,

which was suddenly cut short by a servant, who came up the stairs and whispered to him. He returned the lamp to Miss Clarence, bowed, and hurried away. She turned to inquire the stranger's name of the servant, but, half ashamed of her curiosity, she hesitated, and while she hesitated, he disappeared.

Gertrude then went to her own apartment. After remaining there a while, she missed her keys, and recollecting she had left the bag that contained them in the parlor, she went down stairs in quest of them. As she approached the parlor-door which stood a-jar, she heard voices in low and earnest conver sation. She listened; one was Mrs. Layton: her heart beat, and she sprang forward, and again stopped, for she perceived that her friend was deeply absorbed in a *tête à tête*, evidently private, with the stranger whom she had met in the gallery. They had been quite too much interested in their own affairs to hear Miss Clarence' light tread, and there being no light in the passage, she stood for a moment without the fear of observation. Mrs. Layton leant against the window, her

handkerchief at her eyes, and her back to the light, which fell strongly on the stranger's face. His fine features were kindled with a glow of earnest feeling: he spoke in a tone of mingled supplication and remonstrance. 'Such a man could scarcely speak in vain,' thought Gertrude, as she turned away, and stole back to her own apartment. There she revolved in her own mind the probable meaning of Mrs. Layton's unexpected appearance at Trenton—the obscure intimations in relation to Emilie in her farewell note—this private interview with the elegant stranger—the Utica scrawl; and she would probably have arrived at the right exposition, if that had not involved Mrs. Layton in deep reproach. Of course, that was rejected; and after going round, in the same circle, she gave up the subject as inexplicable, and resigned her mind to the sweet fancies awakened by a dewy moonlight evening.

Gertrude Clarence, in daylight, and amidst the real affairs of life, was truly what Mrs. Layton had called her, a fit heroine for the nineteenth century; practical, efficient, direct, and decided—a rational woman—that

beau-ideal of all devotees to the ruling spirit of the age—utility. But it must be confessed she had certain infirmities of olden and romantic times clinging to her; that she loved in moonlight and retirement to abandon herself to the visions of her imagination; that she sought and loved the beauty and mystery of nature; that she gave her faith to the poetry of life—the sublime virtue that is sometimes manifested in actual human existence,—and that always visits the dreams of the enthusiast, as the fair forms of their divinities were presented to the inspired vision of the Grecian sculptors.

CHAPTER II.

"Is't possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her?—that but seeing you should love her!"

AS YOU LIKE IT.

We have violated the consecrated privacy in which Miss Clarence sheltered her romantic taste, to prepare our readers for a sally that might otherwise appear extravagant. It was a night to call forth all the secret correspondencies between the spirit and the outward world; a night when the soul responds harmonious to the voice of nature; when the intellectual life, that like the electric principle, pervades the material world, becomes visible and audible, is seen in the starry depths of heaven, and speaks in the 'viewless air.' It was a night—just such as

every body has seen, though perchance not thus marked—in midsummer, sweet, bright, and soft. There had been a slight shower, and the atmosphere was charged with the perfume of all the wild flowers that abound in the forest in June—the month of flowers. The clouds had broken away and dispersed, save here and there a few light silvery forms, that, as they melted away in the moonlight, seemed the very coinage of the brain, shaped in fancy's changing mould; now winged spirits, now graces wreathing themselves in flowers; now fairies at their elfin gambols, and now—nothing. On such a night it is treason against nature to steep the senses in sleep; voluntarily to close the natural entrances to all this glory; at least, so thought Gertrude, and obeying a sudden impulse, she threw on her shawl, and creeping softly down stairs, she entered the apartment where the only member of the family who was out of bed, was drowsily adjusting his ledger. "I am going down to the falls," she said.

"Miss! you'll see them far plainer by daylight."

Gertrude did not think it worth while to

explain the advantage of the *clair obscur*, and simply requested a lamp might be left standing in the entry for her. The man assented without expressing any inconvenient curiosity or surprise. The head of the financial department of the 'rural resort' was a little ancient gentleman, (gentleman by courtesy—illimitable republican courtesy!) who trudged on his narrow walk of life without looking to the right or left to scan the motives, or even observe the conduct of his fellow-travellers. That a lady should desire to see the falls by moonlight, appeared to him no more strange than that she should wish to view them by daylight. If he valued falls, it was as 'water privileges;' and the only 'view' he took of picturesque objects was of their effect on the bright side of the landlord's ledger. Gertrude, therefore, happily escaped a remonstrance, and soon found herself in the little path traversing the deep wood which borders the precipitous bank of the West Canada creek—a narrow, deeply embedded stream, that, after winding, leaping, and foaming in its unnoticed solitude for centuries, has, within the last few years,

become one of the staple curiosities of the country.

Miss Clarence had passed a few weeks of the preceding summer at Trenton, and was secure in her familiarity with the forest-paths. It seemed as if all nature were hushed in silence to listen to the music of the dashing waters. Not a breath of air was stirring. The leaves reposed in the still atmosphere. The moon looked as if she were immoveably set in the far, cloudless depths of the heavens, and where her rays stole in through the lofty branches, and slept on the moss-grown trunks, or dewy herbage, not the slightest quivering of the leaves broke or varied the clear, defined outline of the bright spaces. There is something vast and oppressive in such immobility and stillness, and Gertrude felt, in approaching the brawling, noisy, little stream, as if it were a living soul—a being endowed with feeling and sympathy, and voice to speak them. She rapidly descended the several flights of steps, that afford but a slippery and inconvenient passage down a precipitous rock of a hundred feet in height—so grudgingly does art seem

to have lent her aid to her mistress nature—though here nature may well scoff at her handmaid's negligence, for here she reigns a queen of beauty; every heart does her homage; every heart! the very trees, as they bend from the walled banks and almost embower the sportive stream, seem in the act of reverence.

Gertrude pursued the usual walk along the margin of the stream, now passing with security over the broad, flat rocks, and now cautiously creeping around the jutting buttresses, whose bases are fretted by the foaming torrent, and whose sides afford a perilous passage along a shelving ledge, scarcely wide enough for a heron's foot. Fortunately, Gertrude had none of the physical sensitiveness that renders some persons incapable of approaching a rapid stream without dizziness. Self-possessed, and sure-footed, she passed the most difficult passages without fear and without danger. She ascended to the summit of the first fall by the natural and rough stair-way, and, pursuing her walk, canopied by the over-arching rocks, and creeping along the shelving shore, she attained the side of the foaming, deep abyss, into which

the stream rushes at two bold leaps. She stood for some moments gazing on the torrent, and almost deafened by its roar, when she was startled by a footstep close to her. She turned, and saw the stranger who seemed, that evening, destined to cross her path at every turn. He bowed respectfully, and said he had not expected the pleasure of meeting any one at that extraordinary hour —but he added, 'no hour could be more fit for a devotee to nature to visit her sanctuary.'

Gertrude thought there was something like a sarcastic smile playing about his lip, as if his reading of 'a devotee to nature' was 'a mighty romantic young lady,' a construction she felt was warranted, but a light in which she did not quite like to appear.

"Neither did I," she said, returning the stranger's smile, "think of the possibility of meeting any one this evening. I came simply for the pleasure of seeing the falls by moon-light—by all other lights I am familiar with them."

"But no other light can," replied the stranger, "be so well adapted to them.

Broad day-light, and a party of exclaiming, professed admirers of scenery, convert the most poetic passages into dull prose."

"Yes," said Gertrude, pleased with a feeling so exactly corresponding with her own. "Solitude and moon-light are certainly the best accompaniments to fine scenery. They are like the vehicle of music to the inspirations of the poet."

"And this is fine scenery," said the stranger; "I have been scrambling along the bank for two miles above this place, and never have I seen such various and startling beauty. The river has so many abrupt turns, and graceful sweeps—at every step there is a new picture, as if you had turned another leaf in the book of nature. I have seen three falls, above this, of less magnitude; and I have been told they occur, at intervals, for several miles. But the falls are only one feature. The sides of the stream are varied, and every where beautiful; in some places richly wooded; in others, stern, bare, perpendicular rocks—now sending over their beetling summits a little cascade, that falls at your feet in diamond

drops, and then crested with a hanging cedar that waves like a warrior's plume—now receding and sloping, and mantled with moss and fern, or sending out from their clefts, sturdy trees—sylvan sentinels on nature's battlements. In one place the rocks recede and are concave, and the river appears like an imprisoned lake, or a magician's well, —— there, I confess, I listened for an 'open sessame,' and thought it possible I might see an enchanted damsel walk forth, with her golden pitcher."

"But you saw none," said Gertrude. "Ours is not the country of enchantments—nature is *merely* nature here—neither enriched nor embellished, nor rendered sublime by traditionary tales, nor supernatural graces or terrors."

"No, thank heaven, no terrors. I was never better pleased than now, with living in a country where a lady may walk forth, at midnight, without fear or danger."

Gertrude felt the awkwardness of her position the moment it was alluded to; and she rather abruptly asked the stranger, 'if he had ever seen Niagara?'

'He was ashamed to confess he had not. It was the fashion,' he said, 'to compare Trenton to Niagara, but he thought Trenton must be about as much like Niagara, as a frolicsome child was like to Hercules, or the finite to the infinite.'

"And yet," said Gertrude, "I hear the comparison often made, and Trenton often preferred. She is a younger favorite, and has the advantage of youth and novelty over the sublime torrent. She has not been heard of by every body in the four quarters of the globe; nor seen and talked of by half the world. We feel something of the pride of discoverers in vaunting her beauty. She has, too, her caprices and changes, and does not show the same face to all. This is one of her peculiar charms. There is such a pleasure in saying, 'Oh what a pity you did not see the falls as we did!' and 'ah,' with a shrug, '*we* but just escaped with our lives. There had immense rains fallen, and the passes were all but impassable.' There are no such lucky chances of superiority at Niagara. Like a monarch, Niagara always appears in the same state

and magnificence. It pays no visible tribute to the elements; it is neither materially abated nor augmented by them. Niagara is like the ocean, alone and incomparable in its grandeur." It was apparent that Gertrude had seen Niagara, and the stranger naturally asked her many questions in relation to it. From Niagara he adverted to kindred topics. Not a water-fall, natural bridge, or mountain-resort, was passed by, till the meeting was protracted to the last limit of propriety. There is a peculiar pleasure in meeting with a stranger who discovers at once kindred tastes and feelings with our own. If it be a single sentiment, it is sometimes like a word in the 'correspondences' of a certain mystical sect, which may be a key to a whole volume. Acquaintance makes rapid strides in such circumstances; and it was not singular that the stranger, whose imagination was no doubt stimulated by the time and place of their encounter, should linger in Gertrude's presence. He felt there was no propriety in detaining her any longer, if she intended to prosecute her walk; nor, much as he

desired to do it, could he, after her declaration, that she had come out for a solitary stroll, offer to attend her; and, inwardly praying she might say no, he asked if she meant to proceed farther. She answered—for she was not in the palace of truth, nor dared she follow her inclinations—'yes,' and the stranger, with evident reluctance, bade her good night, and soon disappeared.

Gertrude now proceeded very slowly up the next aclivity. The walk had lost its charms. Her mind was entirely occupied with the stranger, and with conjectures who he could be. 'He did not seem,' she thought, 'to remember our first meeting this evening; his mind must have been intent on his approaching interview with Mrs. Layton. If I had had but one glance at him, I should never have forgotten him.' She pondered over his interview with Mrs. Layton. 'Could he be her husband? No, he was far too young. Could he be Emilie's lover? No, such a lover could never need the interposition of parental authority.' Suddenly, (and at the thought, she stopped stock still,) it occurred to her that he wonderfully

resembled the image of Gerald Roscoe, impressed on her mind by her father's often repeated descriptions. She passed the stranger's features in review: his dark complexion, bold expanded forehead, singularly black hair, a stature and form cast in the heroic mould; the prevailing darkness of his face, relieved by a smile that disclosed a set of as white and beautiful teeth as ever decorated a mouth. 'How often has my father said,' thought Gertrude, 'that Gerald's smile was electrifying;' that it was 'like the sun bursting through a cloud—a smile of intelligence, arch, sportive, and good-humored.' 'Could this stranger be described more accurately?'

Gertrude was startled and roused from her reverie by what she fancied to be a strain of music. It seemed wafted over the torrent, and not mingling with its din, as if the breathing of some spirit above her. There was no visible agent. 'Am I deceived by the solitude, the scene, the hour; or is it an unearthly sound?' thought she. She looked timidly around, and as she listened,

the strain sounded familiar. "*It cannot* be!" she exclaimed; and yet, impelled by an irresistible impulse, she sprang forward in the direction whence the sound came. "Should it be he!" she cried fearfully, and hurrying through a tangled path, she came out on a broad projecting rock, that, although a few feet below the summit of the lower fall, commanded a full view of it. On that summit stood a figure enveloped in a white dress, and so shaded by branches, that hung like banners over the glittering waters, that it was impossible to say whether the figure were man or woman; whether it were human, or some strange visitant from another world. While Gertrude gazed fearfully, the person advanced to the brink of the water, threw the flute into the torrent, bent over it, and clasped his hands as if in prayer. "Louis!—Louis Seton! oh, God of mercy, save him!" shrieked Gertrude. The scream of agony reached his ear, and arrested him; he looked wildly around. She reiterated her cries and waved her handkerchief. He saw her, and descended the cliff towards her

so swiftly and recklessly, that she covered her eyes in terror, lest she should see him plunge into the abyss.

As he drew near, she ventured again to look at him. His cheeks were crimsoned with fever, his eyes had a supernatural brightness, his fair brow was as pale as marble, and his long flaxen hair, which had at all times a sentimental and student-like air, was in the wildest disorder. He had carelessly thrown over his under garments a white dressing-gown, and his whole appearance confirmed Gertrude in her first impression, that he was delirious. But when he said, in his usual low-toned gentle voice, "You called me—did you not, Gertrude?" she replied, half reassured, and still half doubtful, "Yes; I feared you were venturing too near the fall, and," she added, with a smile of admirable self-possession, "I thought myself fortunate to meet you just at the very moment I was returning homeward, and dreading to retrace the way alone."

"Oh, do not go yet! Why go away from

this beautiful scene? It is a glimpse of heaven; I will never leave it but for a brighter," he added, in a tone of unwonted decision and confidence; "Sit down on this rock, Gertrude—I did not expect this—this is the first blissful hour of my life. Do not look so terrified—this is the gate of heaven—you shall see how I will throw off the load of life, and leap through it; oh, it was very good of you, to come out to see this—come, sit down!"

There was something irresistibly appealing, and affecting in his manner, and Gertrude smothered her fears and sat down; "I dreamed," he continued, "an angel would show me the way—it's very strange—I cannot account for it;" he passed his hand over his brow, like one who would disentangle his recollections,—"I do not think, Gertrude, it ever occurred to me, that you were to be that angel."

"But I am," said Gertrude, rising, and hoping to govern him, by humoring his wild fancies, "I am, and you are bound to follow whither I lead. Come, we must hasten

home, Louis—follow me, I intreat you." He rose and followed, half-singing, and half-screaming.

'This will not do, I am exciting his delirium,' thought Gertrude; and stopping suddenly, she said, with all the composure she could command, "I ought, indeed, to be an angel to flit over these rocks at this unearthly rate. We had best return to our every-day characters, Louis; it is childish to risk our lives, in this foolish way."

Her natural tone and manner, for a moment, restored Seton to himself, and his thoughts reverted to their accustomed channel. "It is then a delusion," he said, "yes—yes, life is a delusion—hope a delusion—and yet, who can live without hope? I cannot, and why should I, passively remain here to suffer? Gertrude, did you see my flute, as it silently floated away? But a moment before, the woods rang with the music my troubled heart poured into it. Think you, Gertrude, it would be as easy to still that heart, as the poor instrument?"

"But the heart is not yours, Louis," said Gertrude, assuming a playfulness, difficult

to affect, while she was in a panic; "you gave me your heart, you know, and you have no right to resume it."

"Yes, I gave it you, Gertrude, and it was a good gift—a true loving heart—but you would not take it—you could not—you know you said so—but, one thing I tell you, Miss Clarence, you will go forth into the world, you will be sought, and flattered, and you will learn, from bitter experience, the value of a true, faithful heart—no wealth can buy it—Wealth! wealth! That was a cruel letter; it was the last drop in the cup. Gertrude, I felt as if I were going mad, yesterday — but I am well, quite well, now."

Gertrude became more alarmed, at every new incoherency; and felt her total helplessness, should he again attempt the violence on himself, he had purposed. It struck her that she might, possibly, lure him onward, by addressing his love of his art, next to his love for her, his strongest passion; therefore without replying, or adverting, to any thing he had said: "Come, Louis!" she exclaimed, "we are wasting time—you promised me

some moon-light sketches of the falls; and, farther on, there is a beautiful view—if we do not hasten, we shall lose the best light for it. She walked at as quick a pace as she dared; and Seton, obedient as a bird to his lady's whistle, followed her. They proceeded on their return, beyond the first fall; and Gertrude meant to lead him on, without alluding again to the view, but his painter's eye, as it rolled from shore to shore, caught the point of sight. "Ah! here it is," he said, "beautiful as a painter's dream—but I have no port-folio, no paper—never mind, I can draw on the impalpable air. I will put you in the fore-ground—you were in the fore-ground of all my pictures—my air-drawn pictures," he added, with a faint smile.

"But I must have a picture that I can see—here, take my handkerchief—you can make a perpendicular and a horizontal line, and write light and shadow; that is enough, you know, for an artist's sketch."

He kissed the handkerchief devoutly, spread it on his knee, took a pencil from his pocket, and contemplated the scene intently; the

preparation for an habitual occupation restored, for a time, the equilibrium of his mind; his thoughts returned to their natural channel. "Such scenes as these," he said, "are the despair of the painter."

"Why the despair? you never fail in your water views. Mrs. Layton said she was afraid to let Argus see your picture of the lake, lest he should try to lap the water."

"Ah, that was sleeping water; but who can paint this beautiful motion—this sound, the voice of the waterfall—the spray, the most etherial of all material things—the light mist rising, and floating around those over-hanging woods, like the drapery of spirits, made visible to mortal sense?"

"But you can imitate the most exquisite tints of flowers; and surely, you can paint these wild geraniums, and blue-bells."

"Yes, I can imitate them; but, in the still picture, will they speak to us as they do now, looking out in wild and tender beauty, from the crevices of these stupendous rocks? I can paint these vines that richly fringe those beetling crags: I might attempt

their expression of security; but can I give their light fantastic grace, their brightening and deepening hues, as they wave in the gentlest breath of heaven?"

"Oh, no, certainly not! you cannot make all the elements of nature tributary to your art; you cannot work miracles; you can but repeat in the picture one aspect of the scene. You can give the deep amber tint of the water, but not every varying shade it takes from the passing clouds. You can imitate these wild, broken shores, but not the musical tripling of the drops, as they swell and fall from ledge to ledge. A picture is, of course, dumb nature; it addresses but one sense; it is what you *can* do, that constitutes the glory of your art; and it is a weakness, Louis, to dwell on what you cannot do."

Gertrude had unwarily touched the wrong key. Seton sprang to his feet—"A weakness, is it Gertrude? do *you* reproach me with my weakness?—Yes, it is the extreme of weakness; but I have struggled against it—far, far worse, I have quietly endured it: I will not longer—why should I? The world

cares not for me; nor I for the world. I have floated on its dark, troubled surface, like those bubbles on the stream—they dissolve and are forgotten. So shall I be."

He spoke with the resolute air of despair. Gertrude's heart sank within her; but calling forth all her courage, she said, "I agree with you, Louis; the world has dark, tiresome passages enough; but even the worst of them, like our rugged path here, may be cheered by a light from above. The light always shines. Cannot you open your bosom to it?"

"Gertrude!" he replied, with a bitter smile; "do not mock me: tell those fretted waters to give back the image of the heavens, serene and unbroken: bid the stream glide quietly over these sharp rocks: ask that solitary pine to go and bend among its fellows. It is far easier to contend with nature, than with the elements of the soul. I am wearied with the conflict. I have struggled, and I am subdued. I have had such horrid dreams: my cruel brother grinning at me—the world's laugh and scorn ringing

in my ears—your voice, louder than all the rest."

"Do not think of it—it was a dream—nothing but a dream, Louis."

"Yes, it was a dream: and now you speak to me in your own kind voice—this is reality." He took her hand and pressed it to his scorching lips: "I have heard the parting spirit had always some intimation of the future—of good, or evil: this is good—this is light to my heart: I have no more fear. Farewell — farewell!" Again and again he kissed her hand: "it is over now, Gertrude," and he sprang towards the rushing stream.

Gertrude grasped his arm, and, shivering with terror, detained him forcibly. "Have you no pity on me, Louis? do not leave me here alone; attend me round these dreadful rocks; I shall never get back to my father without your help; you can return directly. Come, do not—do not," she continued, imploringly, "refuse me this last kindness; come, quickly." She moved forward, and perceiving that he followed, she ran along

the broken shore, sprang from the rolling stones, and leaped from crag to crag, forgetful of all dangers but one, till she came to the last projecting rock, where the foothold is extremely narrow, and rendered most perilous by the agitation of the water, which at times lashes the side of the rock, but five or six feet below the narrow margin on which the passenger treads, in a position not quite upright, but rather inclining over the stream. The hazard of this passage was extreme. Seton still followed and was close to her, but the spell that had controlled him so far might break at any moment. The incoherent sounds he uttered at every step, now escaping in indistinct murmurs, and then swelling to shrieks, indicated, too truly, the rapid access of his delirium. Gertrude's courage failed—a nervous sickness came over her—her head turned, her feet faltered, and she retreated a few steps, and sank to the ground.

It was but a momentary weakness; she ejaculated a prayer for resolution and strength, and sprang to her feet again. "I am rested now, Louis," she said; "once

round this rock, we are almost home; follow me, dear Louis." She advanced to the perilous path, and proceeded around the projecting cliff, without again faltering.

Seton followed to the front of the rock and then stopped, and stood fixed and immoveable, as if he were part of it. His face was towards Gertrude, but his eye was glazed and turned upwards: it appeared that his senses were paralyzed, and that he neither saw, heard, nor felt; for though Gertrude urged, supplicated, and wrung her hands in agony, he maintained the same statue-like stillness, looking like an image carved in the rock, before which a terror-struck suppliant was standing. Gertrude dared not advance towards him—his position did not admit assistance—and the slightest movement, though involuntary, might prove fatal. She cried to Heaven for aid,—but while the unavailing prayer was on her lips, Seton slipped gently from the rock into the current below! In another breath his body swept past her. A little lower down, the current was less impetuous; a few yards lower still it was broken by the rocks and tossed in rapids.

He evidently struggled against the current. "Oh! he tries to save himself," cried Gertrude. An eddy seemed to favour his efforts, and impel him towards the shore. "Merciful God, help him!" she screamed, and sprang forward, in the hope that she might herself extend some aid; but, instantly, a counter-current swept him off towards the rapids, and his destruction seemed near and inevitable. Gertrude gazed after him, speechless, motionless—as if awaiting the doom of fate. Suddenly there was a splash in the water, and a person appeared approaching the descending body. "Should he resist—!" cried Gertrude. But he did not resist. It was at the calmest and most favourable point in the whole stream for such an interposition, and, perilous as it was, it succeeded; and Seton, who had not yet quite lost his consciousness, was drawn in safety to the rocks. . Gertrude flew to him. She knelt beside him, and dried the water from his face and neck with her shawl. His preserver was active and efficient. He supported Seton's head on his breast, and chafed his hands and arms.

Seton was, for a few moments, incapable of motion or articulation, but he looked intelligently at Gertrude, and as if he felt, to the heart's core, the joy and gratitude that lit up her face with an almost supernatural brightness. When her first emotion gave place to a more natural tone of feeling, she would have fainted—but she never fainted: she would have wept, but there was still something to be done. She attempted to rise, but her limbs trembled to such a degree as to be useless. "I pray you to make no effort." Gertrude started at the voice, and, for the first time, looking at Seton's preserver, she perceived he was the stranger. He smiled at the sudden recognition apparent on her countenance. "I have been lingering at the steps here," he said, as if in reply to her looks, "detained by my good fortune for your service. You are suffering even more than your friend from this accident." And so she appeared, for Seton was stimulated by fever. "You both need more assistance than I alone can give you. I will go for aid, and return instantly."

"Oh, not for the world," replied Ger-

trude, for she felt the importance to Seton of keeping the adventure a secret: "not for the world," she reiterated. She perceived the stranger smiled archly at her earnestness, and she guessed at his interpretation. 'He thinks this, no doubt, an appointed meeting of lovers, and Louis's fall accidental; that at least is a happy mistake.' In one particular she was determined to rectify his misconception. "I came here," she continued, without the slightest expectation of meeting any one. I therefore can have neither reluctance nor fear to be left alone. This foolish trembling will be over in a few moments, and I will then follow you if you will have the goodness to give your arm to my friend —it has already done us a service for which we have no words to thank you."

Seton now for the first time broke silence and attempted, though confused and embarrassed, to express his gratitude. "I beg you not to waste your strength in this way," said the stranger, "I will take it for granted that you are infinitely obliged to me, for a service that cost me nothing but a little wetting, a circumstance not altogether

disagreeable on a hot evening. I really have not encountered the slightest danger; but if I may make a merit of this accidental service," he continued, bowing courteously to Miss Clarence, ' I claim the right to return and escort you, after I have attended your friend."

" We are so deeply your debtors, that you may impose your own conditions. I will await you if necessary—or meet you."

" If necessary! pardon me then, if I put some constraint on your courtesy. The evening is becoming cool, allow me to wrap my cloak about you; it shall be fetters and warder till my return." As he spoke, he took his cloak from the ground where he had hastily thrown it, and adjusted it around Miss Clarence. At another time Gertrude might have felt a girlish and natural diffidence at receiving such attentions from a stranger; but serious emotions give to these little punctilios their due insignificance, and she received his kindness as quietly as if it were warranted by old acquaintance. Seton's unnatural strength was the only indication of the continuance of his fever.

He was tranquil and it appeared probable from the exertions he had made for self-preservation, that his first immersion in the water had stimulated his reason. Gertrude watched him anxiously till he disappeared from her in ascending the steps, and then she gave utterance to her devout gratitude for his preservation from death, by an interposition that appeared to her to have been miraculously provided. Accustomed to think and decide independently, she determined to keep poor Seton's sad affair, so far as depended on herself, a profound secret. 'Even my father, kind and indulgent as he is,' she thought, 'would not deem it quite prudent to retain Louis after this; but have I not solemnly promised to be a sister to him? and when he most needs a sister's love and care, I will not abandon him.' From Seton her thoughts naturally turned to the stranger. 'How very strange our repeated meetings,' she thought, 'how heroic his rescue of Louis! and yet (she was constrained to confess it) a common man would have done the same; but not in the same manner. There was a careless grace about

him, as if great actions were at least familiar to his imagination.' All her reflections ended in the natural query, 'who can he be?' Suddenly it occurred to her that his cloak might be labelled, and instantly throwing it from her shoulders, she sought and found, neatly wrought in large black letters, *Gerald Roscoe.*

Is it fair farther to expound Gertrude's thoughts? It must be told, that, stimulated by an entirely new set of emotions, she rose, threw the cloak from her, adjusted her hair, which she was mortified to find had fallen down, and which, as dame nature had given it neither the canonical heroine wave, nor curl, could not but be ungraceful in disorder.

It certainly appeared to her that destiny had maliciously arranged the circumstances of her introduction to the hero of her imagination. How often in those reveries in which young ladies will indulge when they weave the plot of a little personal romance—how often had she contrived the particulars of their first meeting—like a skilful painter, and with pardonable vanity, ar-

ranged the lights and shadows to give the best effect to the picture. And now—to be first seen by him rambling over perilous rocks, at the witching time of night, and suspected, as she knew she must be, of an appointment with a young man of Seton's appearance, and in such a fantastical dress, and she such a figure! She remembered the smile she had detected on Roscoe's lips, and the thought that she had at least appeared ridiculous to him, was intolerable. Then she recollected the Utica scrawl, and was compelled to admit the conviction that Roscoe had written it. This wounded her; it touched her feelings where they were most vulnerable; and, indignant and resentful, she determined to hasten up the steps and avoid, if possible, speaking with him again. The cloak she left on the rock. She could no more have touched it than if it had been Hercules's fatal tunic. She forgot that a few moments before she could scarcely support her own weight, ascended the several flights of steps without halting, and had reached the very last, when she met Roscoe returning. She was embarrassed

and breathless, and without stopping — without the slightest acknowledgement of his courtesy, or apology for the trouble she gave him, " You will find your cloak," she said, " on the rocks—good night, sir." But Roscoe did not appear to notice her abruptness. " I expected," he said, turning and offering his arm, which she declined—he mended his phrase, " I hoped to have had the pleasure of finding you there too—I beg you will not walk so rapidly—you have no occasion for anxiety about your friend; he reached the house without difficulty—and his own room,"—he added, with, as Gertrude thought, a very significant emphasis—" his own room *without observation.* I am quite sure of it, for I remained in the entry till I heard his door close." Miss Clarence made no reply, and they walked on a few paces in silence. Roscoe then said, " I am curious to learn how the accident happened. I asked your friend, but he evaded my inquiry —he perhaps felt that his foot ought not to have faltered, where yours trod safely."

Gertrude, in her confusion, and desire to

shelter Seton, said, "he was weak from recent illness."

"An imprudent exposure for an invalid!" returned Roscoe, with another of his provoking smiles, "but I honour his self-forgetfulness in so romantic a cause, and only wonder that a prosaic personage like myself has been allowed to appear in the drama, though it be only to turn the wheel of fortune for others, and be dismissed and forgotten, when I have enacted my inglorious part." They had now reached the door-steps, and he added in a lower voice, "I am compelled to return immediately to the village, and proceed thence in the stage-coach —may I presume to ask the names of my new acquaintance?

"Oh, no—do not ask them—do not, I entreat you, inquire them—do not ever speak of what has happened to-night. The life," she continued, for she had now quite recovered the power of thought and speech, "the life you have preserved would be worthless if there were any exposure."

"Shall I make a vow of secresy?" he asked, bending his knee gracefully to the

step, gallantly taking her hand, and speaking in a tone of raillery that Gertrude felt made her pathetic appeal almost ridiculous; " I do make it," he added with mock solemnity, " craving only an exception in favor of one friend, a safe confidante—my mother. I call on the bright moon to witness my vow," and in token of sealing it, his lips approached her hand, but without presuming to touch it. " Now I have pledged the honour of a true knight—do I not deserve a dispensation in my favour ?"

While Gertrude hesitated, resolved not to give her name, and feeling that it was almost childish to withhold it, a window-sash above their heads was gently raised, and murmuring a heart-felt ' God bless you,' she escaped into the entry. There she lingered long enough to ascertain that Mrs. Layton was speaking to Roscoe; and then, after listening at Seton's door, and finding all quiet there, she retired to her room to revolve over and over again, and to place in various lights and shadows, the events of the evening.

She had seen Roscoe at last ! and in spite

of her personal mortification and vexation, she liked him—she could not help it—she rejoiced in her inmost soul, that she was still unknown to him as the dreaded *rich* Miss Clarence, and she finally fell asleep with the secret, sweet consciousness, that she had not impressed him as altogether the counterpart of '*Miss Eunice Peabody!*'

CHAPTER III.

" Surtout lorsqu'on a l'air de plaisanter avec le sort, et de compter sur le bonheur, il se passe quelque chose de redoutable dans le tissu de notre histoire, et les fatales sœurs viennent y mêler leur fil noir, et brouiller l'œuvre de nos mains."—Corinne.

Miss Clarence was up at gray dawn, awaiting intelligence from Seton. She had directed his nurse to inform her how he passed the night; and, though conscious she was better informed than any one else, she was anxious to learn the effect of his wild sally. John soon appeared. " Mr. Seton," he said, " lay in a dead sleep, but was nothing worse. I have not closed my eyes," continued John, " the whole blessed night, but one bare minute, and then while I dozed, as it were, Mr. Louis took the advantage to

slip down stairs, and pump some water on his head, that was fiery hot, and the poor young gentleman came back, as wet as a drowned kitten ; I was scared half out of my wits ; but I put on him dry clothes, and got him quite comfortable ; and I hope Miss Gertrude nor Mr. Clarence won't take it amiss that I was overcome with that wink of sleep."

But Miss Gertrude, though the gentlest of kind mistresses, did take it very much amiss ; and reproved John, with the utmost severity that the offence, according to his statement of it, (which she was compelled to receive,) admitted. Those are to be deeply compassionated, who are obliged to trust to menials and strangers, for offices, in which affection alone can overcome the weariness of mind and body ! Gertrude felt too late that she had rashly undertaken a task she could not execute. 'Oh, were I his sister indeed !' she thought, 'I would never leave him !' She blamed herself for urging his coming to Trenton, and wished nothing more than to get back to Clarenceville, where, secluded from observation, she might share the per-

sonal care of him with her women; but the physician, at his morning visit, declared a return impossible—he would not even sanction a removal to a private house, but ordered the patient's room to be made perfectly dark, and prescribed the usual remedies for a brain fever.

Miss Clarence was not exempt from the reserve, fastidiousness it may be, so sedulously cherished in the education of our country-women. But every thing was well proportioned, and well balanced in her mind; she never sacrificed the greater to the less. The moment she ascertained that Seton's reason was so far alienated, that he would probably be quite unconscious of her presence—and that it could certainly be of no disservice to him, she went to his room, sat at his bed-side, and watched him, as if he were in truth her brother. He was alternately torpid and silent, or violent and raving. The only indication that a spark of reason remained, was in the passiveness with which he received from Gertrude what he rejected from every other hand.

In the evening there was a slight remission

of his fever, and Gertrude went to her own apartment, where Emilie Layton, who had sent her repeated messages during the day, was awaiting her. The affectionate girl threw herself into Gertrude's arms—expressed her delight at meeting her in the unqualified terms of youthful ecstacy, and her extreme pity for 'poor Mr. Seton.' After informing her that her mother was longing to see her, but that she had been in bed all day, with a violent head-ache, she was silent, evidently embarrassed, and perplexed. She unclasped and clasped her bracelet twenty times, twisted every feather of her fan away, and at last, throwing her handkerchief over her face, she said, "dear Gertrude, I am engaged to be married to Mr. Pedrillo."

"Emilie!" exclaimed Gertrude.

Nothing could be more simple and bare, than the exclamation; but it was a key-note to Emilie's ear. "I knew you would think so, Gertrude," she said, as if replying to a long remonstrance—"I told mamma you would—but it is not so very—*very* bad;" and she laid her head on Gertrude's shoulder, and sobbed aloud.

"But my dear, sweet Emilie, if it be bad at all?"

"Well, I don't know that I can say it is bad at all—at least, it would not be, if——"

"If what? speak out, Emilie."

"Oh! I had rather speak out to you, than not; I am sure my heart will feel the lighter for it. You are so reasonable, and so judicious, and all that, Gertrude, that I suppose you have not felt so; but I expected to be in love when I married. Ever since I first thought of it at all, though I can't remember when that was, I have expected to love, and adore my husband—I have always said, I would never marry any man that I was not willing to die for."

"And 'judicious and reasonable' as you think me, neither would I, Emilie."

"Would not you, Gertrude? would not *you?*—then, it is right—I am sure it is right;" and her beautiful face brightened all over; but, instantly, a shadow crossed it—as much of a shadow as can appear on a freshly blown rose—and sighing heavily, she added, "but it is no use now—it is all settled."

"Irrevocably?"

"Irrevocably; mother says, to recede would be ruinous to us all; she has not explained to me how, because she cannot bear to make me as miserable as she is. If I can make them all happy, I ought—ought I not, Gertrude?"

"If you can, without too great a sacrifice, Emilie."

"It seems to me a great sacrifice; I do not, and never can love Mr. Pedrillo, and you know, I must never love any body else; so it is a total sacrifice of my affections; but that is all. I like Mr. Pedrillo—at least, I should, if he did not want me to love him. Mother, says she is certain, that after I have been married a year, I shall like him better than nine women out of ten like their husbands. He is very kind, and generous to me; he gave me these splendid bracelets; but Gertrude, when I put them on, I could not help thinking of the natives of Cuba, you know, who thought, poor simpletons, that the Spaniards were only decorating them with beautiful ornaments, when they were fastening manacles on their wrists. I always

hated Spaniards—I am sorry Mr. Pedrillo is a Spaniard—I cannot forget it, though he does not look at all Spanish. Mamma says, he is probably descended from one of the Irish Catholic families that emigrated to Spain. He is called very handsome, Gertrude," she continued, in as plaintive a voice as if she were counting her griefs; "he is very gay when he is pleased; he has seen a great deal of the world though he is not very old—not more than forty."

"Forty! Emilie; and you seventeen!"

"So it seemed to me, Gertrude. I told mamma forty seemed to me as old as the hills, but she quite laughed at me, and quoted something from Molière, about his being the better fitted to guide my youth."

"I presume he is a man of fortune, Emilie?"

"Oh yes, indeed; that is the worst of it; if it were not for that, I could do as I please."

Gertrude's heart was full of sympathy, tenderness, and compassion for the unresisting victim, but she hesitated to express her feelings. 'Why should she increase the reluctance that must be unavailing? Were it

not better to employ her influence over Emilie to reconcile her to the now inevitable event.' She tried to look at the affair in the most favorable point of view, and, as there are few substances so black that they will not reflect some light, so there are few circumstances in life but that have, as the prosers say, 'their advantages as well as disadvantages.'

"I should certainly have carved out for you a different fate, dear Emilie," she said—"to love, as well as to be beloved, is always our young dream."

"Yes, indeed! and is it not hard to awake so very soon from it?"

"Yes; but it might prove an illusion, and you awake to some blessed realities. You might cease to love, but you can never lose the happiness that springs from a difficult sacrifice to filial sentiment."

"That is true, Gertrude, and I will make the most of it. Mamma would have been so wretched—she has so much feeling."

Gertrude recollected the Utica scrawl, and the impassioned interview that she had witnessed between Mrs. Layton and Roscoe,

and some painful distrusts of that lady crossed her mind. The *feeling* that required all the sacrifice to come from others, appeared to be very questionable. "Do not look so troubled about me, dear Gertrude," continued Emilie, rightly interpreting Gertrude's expression. "I never take any thing very hard. Aunt Mary used to say I was born under a mid-day sun—there were no shadows in my path. If she had but lived!—but there is no use in wishing." Emilie was interrupted by a summons to Gertrude from Seton's physician.

"Stop one moment," said Emilie; "I have not yet told you that Mr. Pedrillo is to be here in a few days, and that mamma hopes to be able to see you to-morrow; but she begs you will not speak of this affair to her; 'her nerves,' she says, 'are so torn to pieces,' and—oh! I forgot to mention that I want you to come down stairs to-morrow; there is a Miss Marion here who wishes excessively to see you; and her brother—and indeed, Gertrude, you should come down, for in spite of all I say, every body believes that you must be engaged to

Mr. Seton." Gertrude was solicitous to avoid such an interpretation of her devotion to Seton, and she promised Emilie she would make her appearance on the following day. But the following day found her occupied, weary, and heart-sick, and she declined joining the society below stairs.

Day after day passed, and there was no abatement of Seton's malady. The scene was sad and monotonous to Gertrude, but there were various incidents occurring that were destined to affect the fortunes of those in whom she was interested.

Nothing is more characteristic of our country than the business-like way in which pleasure is pursued. The very few genuine idlers have not yet learned grace or ease in their '*idlesse*.' A genuine idler—a man of entire leisure, is a *rara avis*. The Duke of Saxe-Weimar was asked by an honest Yankee 'what business he followed for a living?' The host of travellers who run away from their offices, counters, and farms, for a few hot weeks in midsummer, hurry from post to post, as if they were in truth 'following the business of travelling for a living.'

Trenton is one of the picturesque stations that must be visited; but, being situated between Niagara and Saratoga, the chief points of attraction, Trenton is the game shot on the wing. Most travellers leave Utica in the morning coach—arrive at Trenton at mid-day—hurry to 'the steps,' and the brink of the 'great fall'—eat their dinner, and proceed on their route, in the full complacency of having seen Trenton! Two or three parties' remaining there for several days, was a rare phenomenon. The Marions, alluded to by Emilie, were Virginians. The mother, son, and daughter, comprised all that remained of their family—a family that, from its earliest existence, had been among the most distinguished of the 'ancient dominion.' The blood of English nobles ran in their veins, and was not, in their estimation, less honorable for having, in its transmission to them, warmed the hearts of pure republican patriots. They were the very reverse of the character which (we are ashamed to confess) is often ascribed by northern prejudice and bigotry to our southern brethren;—active in body and

mind, spirited, gifted, cultivated, kind-hearted, and indulgent to all human kind—even to their slaves—to such a degree, that never was a family better loved or better served by its dependants; and so far from possessing riches, (which some among us fancy lose their wings when they perch on a southern plantation,) they had an hereditary carelessness of pecuniary matters, which, combining with the general deterioration of southern property, menaced them with alarming embarrassments.

Augusta Marion had endured severe afflictions, but she did not increase their force by resistance. She had not the usual sweetness and gentleness of deportment that characterizes the manners of the ladies of the south. On the contrary, she had a startling abruptness; but, as it was the natural expression of an impulsive character, of a quick succession and rapid combination of ideas; and as she had a tender heart and good temper, (in spite of now and then a momentary heat and flash,) her manner became rather agreeable, as suited to the individual, and characteristic of her. She

was sagacious, and her enemies said sarcastic; but if so, her arrows were never poisoned, and never aimed at a reptile that was not noxious.

Randolph Marion, the brother, was the hope, pride, and delight of mother and sister —a man that every body might love and admire, and own they did so without being asked for a reason, for the reason was apparent. He had nothing in excess, but all gentlemanly points and qualities in full measure. He was not a genius, but talented—not learned, but well informed—not 'too handsome for any thing,' but well-looking enough for any body. He was not a wit, nor the mirror of fashion, nor pink of courtesy; but good-humoured and well-bred. In short, he had just that standard of character that attracts the regard of others, without alarming their self-love.

The Marions, or rather we should say Augusta Marion, was Emilie's constant theme during her interviews with Gertrude. 'She was certainly,' she said, 'except her dear Gertrude, the most charming woman in the world; so agreeable and so witty!'

Once or twice the name of Randolph Marion escaped her, but without note or comment. 'She had known them both two years before in Philadelphia, and she had always thought Miss Marion most entirely captivating, and so did her aunt Mary.'

Gertrude was delighted to see that Emilie could crop the flowers in her path. Neither of them perceived they grew on the brink of a precipice. Emilie seldom adverted to her engagement. Like death, it was future and inevitable, but its period was not fixed, to her knowledge, and she felt, in regard to it, all the relief of uncertainty. Little did she suspect that her mother had promised that the marriage should take place as soon after Pedrillo's appearance at Trenton as he should request.

Mrs. Layton was still secluded in her own apartment, and beguiled Gertrude and Emilie—and herself too—with exaggerated expressions of sensibility and suffering! 'She could not see Gertrude,' so said the little twisted pencil-scrawled notes which she sent her twice and thrice a day,—' an indifferent person she could meet without

emotion; but her nerves and affections were so interwoven that one could not be touched without the other vibrating. She was sustained by the consciousness of performing a necessary duty, but she had nothing of the martyr in her composition, and she shrunk from the fagot and the pile. She thanked heaven, poor Em' had not the sad inheritance of her sensibility. In a few days she hoped to see Gertrude—but now her nerves required solitude and a dark room.'

Of all the mysteries and obliquities of the human mind, the arts of self-delusion are the most curious. No doubt Mrs. Layton's imagination figured the fagot and the pile, but was it the martyr or the culprit that suffered?

"Dear Gertrude," said Emilie, bursting into her apartment, and looking as bright and fresh as a sunny morning in June, "we are all going to the falls this afternoon—do promise you will go with us." Mr. Clarence, who chanced to enter the room at the same moment, enforced Emilie's entreaties, and Gertrude promised to

join her in the parlor in the course of half an hour. Accordingly she went to the parlor at the appointed time; but finding no one there, she passed into a small adjoining apartment, and, while she was awaiting Emilie, she examined a collection of minerals belonging to mine host of the 'rural resort,' a versatile genius, who is well known to have diversified the labors of his calling with occasional lectures on the popular sciences. Directly, two other persons entered the parlor, but as their voices were unknown to her, she remained where she was, secluded from observation.

After some common-place remarks about the weather, the lady said abruptly, "Have you made up your mind, Randolph?"

"About what, Augusta?"

"Pshaw! don't blush so—upon my honor, I did not allude to Emilie Layton."

"I did not imagine you did, Augusta."

"Oh, not at all; and you were not think- of her—were you?"

"And if I were?"

"*If*, indeed! No, no, Randolph, you must not enact the lover there—a beautiful gem

she is—but not for your cabinet. Did you ever see such rich hazel eyes, and dark eye-lashes, with such fair hair, and exquisite skin?—did you ever, Randolph?"

"Why do you ask me, Augusta?—you know I never did."

"And such dimples and lips—and her fairy Fenella figure—and her exquisite little feet. I do not believe Pauline Borghese's were as pretty, though it was her custom to denude them to the admiring eyes of her visitors—do you, Randolph? Well may you look grave. It was a cross accident that cast her in your way just now, when such an opportunity of falling eligibly in love is at hand—when, for once, love and reason might meet together in good fellowship."

"As they never did meet, Augusta."

"Ah, that is the cant of one and twenty. But matters are different, arranged with such veterans as mamma and I. You should hear some of our colloquies. Dear mamma! nothing is more amusing than the struggles of her natural tastes against the vulgar necessities of this 'bank-note world.' In your selection of a wife—and mamma has

no doubt you can select from the whole sex —she would not allow the lady's fortune to be even a make-weight in the scale of your favor; but the trifling accessory—the little accident of fortune 'removes the only objection to Randolph's marriage,' so says mamma. 'Removes the objection!' was ever a pecuniary motive more ingeniously stated, and in singleness of heart too. And truly, Randolph, if this Miss Clarence is the paragon of excellence that Emilie represents her, the one objection is removed."

"But, Augusta, what if there be in my heart a thousand one objections?"

"To Miss Clarence?"

"Pshaw! no. What am I to Hecuba, or what is Hecuba to me?"

"I understand you: the objections are to marrying any woman, save one?"

Marion shut the outer door, and then replied, "Yes, Augusta, save one. From you, my dear sister, I have no concealments."

Miss Marion made no reply for some moments — when she did, her voice was changed from raillery to tender seriousness: "I am sorry, Randolph—heartily sorry—

but cannot blame you. All the loves and graces have combined in that pretty creature against your prudence; and then her beauty is so true an index of her sweet, innocent spirit. Well, it can't be helped, and so there's an end of it. No, I do not blame you. On the very verge of the frigid zone of old-maidism as I am, there is nothing I so truly sympathize with as a youthful, reckless, true love—a love that hopes, expects, and believes all things—and fears nothing. Randolph, from the time we knew Emilie in Philadelphia, and you used to carry her music-book to school for her, I have had a presentiment of this, and when we met here, I was sure you had turned the critical page in the book of fate."

"And you permitted me to read it without advice or warning. God bless you, my dear Augusta."

Nothing makes a young heart overflow with gratitude like meeting (especially if unexpected) with hearty sympathy in a love affair. Randolph Marion was a pattern of fraternal affection, but never had he felt more tenderly towards his sister than at this

moment; and when she proceeded to give him more unequivocal proofs of her sympathy, his feelings were raised to a higher pitch than tenderness.

"Randolph," she said, I am frank and direct, and must to the point. I like to remove all moveable obstacles. I do not mean to be pathetic; but you know 'there are but two of us,' and between us two but one heart. I have some fortune, thanks to aunt Molly—there are sad rents in our patrimonial estate—take what I have and repair them, and in return, my dear brother, give me in fee simple a rocking chair at your fire-side, and that, with a life-estate in your heart, is all I ask."

Marion threw his arms around his sister's neck, and expressed in a few broken sentences his admiration of her generosity, and his determination to accept it.

"It is no sudden impulse of generosity, Randolph, but that which I have long expected and determined to do. Since the event that fatally and for ever extinguished my hopes, nothing remains for me but to make others happy; and that, I suspect

after all, is the surest way of making myself so."—At this moment the door opened, and Emilie appeared. She perceived the brother and sister were deeply engaged, and was retreating, but they both begged her to come in, and she then asked 'if Miss Clarence was not there?'

"Heaven forefend!" exclaimed Miss Marion, resuming her natural tone of gaiety.

"She must have come in here," continued Emilie; "her father told me she was here, and the servant says he saw her come in here."

Poor Gertrude had been on the rack for the last ten minutes. There had been no point in the conversation from its start, when she could, without extreme embarrassment, make her appearance. As it had proceeded, she had become as anxious to avoid observation as ever a hidden criminal was to escape detection. She would have jumped out of the window if there had been an open window; but there was none—no possible escape—and she had stood, like a statue, hoping that some kind chance would call the parties

away before she was compelled to make her egress. Emilie approached the door of the inner room, and nothing could in any degree relieve her but an adroit movement. She advanced from her seclusion.

"Gertrude," exclaimed Emilie, "you are here after all!"

The Marions looked thunderstruck. There was tinge enough on Gertrude's cheek to manifest her full consciousness of the awkward position in which she stood. Emilie began the usual form of an introduction.

Gertrude interrupted her; then recovering her self-possession, she said, "An introduction is superfluous, Emilie, you would hand me across the vestibule—I am already in the inner temple—and your friends must believe," she continued, turning to them, her fine countenance animated with the feelings they had inspired, "your friends must believe that I feel its beauty too much, ever to violate its sanctity."

Miss Marion obeyed the impulse of her warm heart and took Gertrude's hand. "We are friends for ever," she said, "and Randolph is in love, literally at first sight." He

certainly looked all admiration. "Do not, my dear Emilie," she continued, "stare as if we had all of a sudden fallen to talking Greek—don't ask, even with your eyes, for an explanation. Here is Mr. Clarence looking as if it were time for us to proceed on our walk." They did so—and when they came to the steps, Mr. Clarence turned off, saying that he had arrived at an age when a man must be excused for preferring to look down upon a water-fall to the inconvenience of descending to look up. The ladies accepted his excuse and promised to join him at the shantee on the brink of the great fall. Emilie took Marion's offered arm, without dreaming of the projects that were agitating his bosom, or the hopes that were hovering on his lips for expression. She was at the happy age when the feelings are enjoyed, without being analyzed. She lived in the present bright hour, careless of the future; for whatever was future seemed to her, as to a child, distant. When they reached the flat rocks at the bottom of the steps, Gertrude was affected by the recollection of the scene she had witnessed when last there.

Miss Marion observed her unnatural paleness, and, imputing it to the debility consequent on her fatigue and anxiety, she insisted on sitting down with her, and permitting Randolph and Emilie to precede them. Randolph was nothing loath to this arrangement, and he soon disappeared with his fair companion. The circumstances of Gertrude's introduction to Miss Marion, enabled them to dispense with the usual preliminaries to acquaintance. They understood one another, and feeling that they did so, they interchanged thoughts on various subjects with the familiarity of friends. Miss Marion did not speak of Emilie, and Gertrude dared not intimate that her destiny was already fixed. They talked of Mrs. Layton, about whom Miss Marion was quite curious. She had never seen her, and had no very favourable impression of her. "I would fain believe, Miss Clarence," she said, "that she deserves the admiration you express of her, but I am certain I should not like her. The happy age of delusion—the luxury of believing all things are what they seem, is past to me. Experience has been to me like the magical un-

guent with which poor Lelia anointed her eyes, that enabled her mortal vision to penetrate through all disguises into the sins and miseries of fairy land. Mrs. Layton is a woman of fashion—a belle at forty! No, I am sure I shall not like her. Thank heaven, Emilie has not been long enough in her atmosphere—a malaria it is—to be infected by her."—Gertrude interrupted Miss Marion to ask if she knew the gentleman who had just descended the steps, and who, after a keen glance at them, eagerly surveyed the only traversable path. "I think I have seen him before," she said, after a moment's consideration. "Oh, yes, that dog I recollect perfectly." She pointed to a beautiful liver-coloured little spaniel, with white tips to his feet and ears, and his sides fleckered with spots so white and distinct, that they appeared like wreaths of snow just lightly thrown there. "I remember now, it was on board the steam-boat I met them—the dog is a perfect beauty." The dog, as if conscious of the admiring gaze of the ladies, and like a flattered belle, anxious to show off his commended graces, plunged into the

water. The current was stronger than he anticipated, and he seemed in imminent danger of being swept away; but he courageously buffetted the waves, whimpering and keeping his eye fixed on his master, who sprang to the brink of the water, crying, "Bravo! bravo! Triton, my good fellow! bravo!—*courage, mon petit!*" He looked as if he would plunge in for his favourite, if it were necessary. But it was not—Triton came safe to land, and, while he was shaking a shower from his pretty sides, and receiving his master's caresses, Gertrude anxiously demanded of Miss Marion if she knew the gentleman's name. "I do not—I meant to inquire—it is such a burden off your mind when you find out a stranger's name—he is evidently a foreigner."

"A foreigner!" echoed Miss Clarence.

"You start, as if a foreigner were of course a pirate, or a great bandit."

The only foreigner Gertrude thought of, at that moment, certainly seemed to her to belong to the class of spoilers. Though Emilie had told her Pedrillo did not look like a Spaniard, yet Gertrude's imagination

had pictured him with dark eyes; with a face of more shade than light, and in every shadow lurking some deep mystery or bad design. The gentleman had large and very light blue eyes, and a fair, clear complexion, though rather deepening to the hue of the *bon vivant*, and Gertrude thought at first sight, (for we would put in a saving clause for her sagacity,) had rather an open, agreeable expression.

"What does your practised eye," she asked Miss Marion, "see of the foreigner in that gentleman?"

"What! why, in the first place, observe his air—the *tout-ensemble*—he has nothing of the 'don't care' negligent demeanour of our countrymen, who, from living always among their equals, from having no superiours to obey, nor inferiors to command, get this easy, indifferent, and careless manner. Our quiet, plodding, uneventful, comfortable lives, are stamped on our faces. They are as different from the Europeans, as the appearance of a tame animal from a wild one. After the smooth surface of youth is broken up, the face bears the record of

individual experience. I was struck with this, in looking at David's picture of the coronation. The remarkable men there clustered around their master, the miracle of the age, looked as if they had lived in an atmosphere of pure oxygen. I remember turning my eyes from the picture to the sober citizens who were gazing at it, and thinking that their faces were as spiritless as shaking Quakers."

"But these are indications to the gifted eye," said Gertrude.

"There are others then, more obvious. Just cast your eye on this gentleman, now his hat is off; you may, for he does not seem conscious of our existence—that profusion of hair would be a curiosity on an American head, over five-and-twenty; and this gentleman has some dozen years more than that—and observe, as he passes his hand over his face, those large, richly set rings. I never saw an American (I mean, of course, a man past boyishness and dandyism) with more than one, and that, some simple token or memorial; and finally, see the string of little silver bells on his dog's

collar.—An American would not venture an appendage so pretty and fastastical. But see, he is coming towards us, and means to speak—of course he is not an Englishman."

The stranger bowed courteously, and made some common-place remarks on the scenery. Whether his accent were foreign, or merely peculiar to the individual, it was difficult to determine. He compared the falls to those on the Caatskill—the Cohoes, the falls of the Genesee, Niagara, la Chaudière, and Montmorenci. This was all American, and Gertrude began to think her companion's sagacity was at fault; but, in the next breath, he spoke of the falls of the Clyde, of Tivoli, and Schaffhausen, as if equally familiar with them. He affected nothing of the amateur of nature, but appeared the citizen of the world, who habitually adapts himself to the taste of the company into which he happens to fall. The ladies rose to pursue their walk, and he bowed, and preceded them at so quick a pace that he was soon out of sight. Brief as their interview had been, Gertrude was

satisfied that Miss Marion was right in her conjectures, and instinctively as she shrank from it, she believed that she ought to rejoice in Pedrillo's arrival. The sooner poor Marion was awakened from his dream, the better; and certainly too, the sooner Emilie was recalled from the labyrinth into which she was blindly plunging. But even her deep interest in her friend was driven from Gertrude's mind, at repassing the rocks on which she had suffered with Seton the agonies of deadly fear and despair — some gentler remembrances beamed athwart her mind.

An abrupt turn in their walk now again brought the ladies in view of, and near to the stranger. He stood partly concealed by a cluster of dwarf-beeches, his face half averted from them, but still they could see that his brow was contracted, his lips compressed, and his eye eagerly fixed on some object; and instantly Gertrude perceived that object was Emilie, and she felt assured the stranger was Pedrillo. Emilie stood beyond, and far above them, on the flat surface of a projecting rock. Her Leghorn

cottage-hat, tied with pink ribbons, had fallen back, and Randolph was interweaving her beautiful tresses with wild flowers. She appeared as lovely, and both were as happy as spirits of paradise; and Pedrillo seemed to regard them with that oblique and evil eye that Satan bent on our first parents in their blest abode—that eye of mingled and contending passions, that expresses the ruined soul. 'Both the ladies stopped, and stood motionless.

All parties were near the great fall. Mr. Clarence was in the porch of the little shantee that overlooks the cascade. Randolph and Emilie had ascended some distance above the basin of the torrent, by the foot-path, that, winding around the perpendicular rocks, and mounting the bare sides of those that are less precipitous, affords a safe, and not very difficult ascent to the cautious and agile passenger. As we have said, Emilie and Marion were standing on the platform of a projecting rock, when Pedrillo first discerned them—there they stood, 'the world forgetting.' It was one of those few blissful moments of life, that borrow nothing from

memory, and ask nothing from hope. Such moments are too often a prelude to weary hours of sorrow; they were fleeting to Emilie, for, recalled to actual existence by a strong and unequivocal expression of Randolph's tenderness, her engagement darted into her mind; she started as if a dagger had pierced her heart, and turned from her lover. As she did so, she saw Pedrillo; she encountered his glance, and she felt to her inmost soul all it conveyed. She uttered a faint exclamation, and turned from the rock to ascend the cliff. She left his side, or rather sprang from him so abruptly, that Marion was not aware of her intention till she was some feet in advance of him. "Be careful, Emilie!" he cried, "Stop! for Heaven's sake, stop —let me precede you. Emilie! Emilie! stop!" he continued, as she, without hearing or heeding him, pressed on. "Just ahead of you is a most perilous place—for God's sake, stop! Emilie! Emilie! you are below the path!"

Still she heeded not, but pressed on with that fearlessness that sometimes secures from

accident. But here there was but one security—but one safe path, and from that she had incautiously deviated. Mr. Clarence saw from above her imminent peril, and screamed to her to stop. Gertrude and Miss Marion perceived, that one more step, and her fate was inevitable; and in the same breath, they uttered a shriek of terror. Pedrillo, too, in a voice that resounded from shore to shore, shouted 'Beware!' Randolph, only, was silent; almost petrified by the immediate presence of the danger of which he saw the full extent without a hope to rescue her. The panic was now fully communicated to Emilie. The shouts above and below confounded her, without conveying any distinct intimation to her mind. Already her foot was on some loose stones that projected over the edge of the precipice, and, only half sustained by the earth in which they were embedded, must be dislodged by the slightest force. She felt them sliding from beneath her feet, and made one more leap forward, but there the support was still more treacherous—the stones gave way at the first touch of her

foot, and she felt herself sinking with them. Instinctively she stretched out her arms, and grasped a bough of hanging cedar that depended over the cliff. Her hold was too weak to sustain the weight of her body, and yet tenacious enough to check her descent. Many feet sheer down the precipice she went, her hands slipping near to the extremity of the limb, where, though scarcely as thick as a common sized rope, it yet supported her.

So powerful is the instinct of self-preservation, that the most weak, and timid, and unexperienced, left alone, without any possibility of help but in the energy of their own efforts, have manifested an amazing power in perceiving and grasping at any means of salvation from destruction. Her friends were gazing in despair. They saw the limb swing back from her released grasp, and believed that all was over. Not so Randolph, for he had already descended the precipice with desperate velocity, and from below he saw Emilie, with the heaven-inspired instinct that would have guided a kid over a mountain crag, gently release one hand from the

bough and grasp some fibrous twigs, that shot out from a fissure in the rock—and, just where she needed the support, and where alone it would avail her, there was a cleft in which she placed her feet. One giddy glance she gave to the precipice below, and the foaming abyss that lashed its side, then turned her face, pressed her brow to the rock, and resolutely closed her eyes to shut out the appalling scene. Pedrillo and Marion now explored the precipice with intense and almost equal anxiety, to find some mode of rescuing her from the frightful position, which, it was evident, she could not long maintain. At the same moment they perceived a fissure in, or rather a ledge, of the rock, just wide enough for a possible, though most perilous passage, from the platform from which Emilie had started to a place a few feet below, and parallel to that where she now was. Both at the same instant sprang towards the platform. Pedrillo was nearest and first attained it, and thus secured himself the precedence on the narrow ledge. Marion's satisfaction at seeing him rapidly approach Emilie to give her the aid, which, if it came

not soon would come too late, was strangely mingled with disappointment at thus being rendered, by the interposition of a stranger, useless to her for whose safety he would have freely given his life. But he soon lost every other feeling in the apprehension that some mis-step—some miscalculated aid, might farther endanger the life, that was now suspended by a single thread. Once or twice Emilie half turned her face towards him. It was as pale as marble; and even at that distance, it was evident, from a certain relaxation of attitude, that her strength and courage were sinking away. What, then, was his astonishment at seeing Pedrillo, after reaching the extremity of the ledge—the point where, if at all assistance was to be given, stand for a moment, survey the abyss, and then return towards the platform. In an instant he reached it. "Some other mode must be tried;" he said, "the ledge at its extremity is inconceivably narrow—there is not breadth enough for a bird's claw—my head became giddy—at the least attempt to aid Miss Layton I must have lost my balance, and we should have been precipitated into the

abyss. Follow me, sir," he continued, with the air of one who has a right to command; "there are persons at the shantee who can help us—ropes must be let down—there is no time to be lost."

"Not an instant," said Marion, "and but one way to save her;" and he passed on to the ledge, with the evident determination 'to do, or die.'

"Oh stop!—my brother — Randolph, stop!" cried Augusta Marion, who, with Gertrude, had attained the platform, and was standing there, both most agitated witnesses of the whole scene.

But Randolph would not heed her; and Gertrude, with a firmness that was a guardian angel in all exigencies, followed Marion, saying, "I am sure I can give your brother assistance—I am used to these rocks—be calm, Miss Marion, and do not look at us."

"Noble creature! God help them!" ejaculated the terrified sister, and, clasping her hands, she sank on her knees; but her lips did not move—her heart scarcely beat—her

whole soul was fixed in one intent breathless interest.

But what was her suffering to that of the father, who stood on the verge of the cliff and saw Gertrude, she in whom all his affections and every hope were concentrated, voluntarily place her life in peril; and that peril, to his view, aggravated by the distance and depth below him.

In the mean time, Pedrillo mounted the rocks, intent on his own project of rescuing Emilie. He had not proceeded far, when his little dog, Triton, who seemed to have become aware that danger pervaded the place, sprang yelping after him and before him, as if to arrest his progress. Pedrillo, in his eagerness, stumbled over him and fell; and in his fall he sprained his ancle so as to be utterly disabled, and was obliged to crawl back to the platform, and there endure an irritation of mind that far surpassed the anguish inflicted by his hurt, though that was by no means trifling. His love for Emilie was the strongest and tenderest sentiment of which he was capable, and he was now con-

demned to remain in utter inaction, and see her beautiful form mutilated, crushed, destroyed; or, an idea scarcely more tolerable, see her saved from this perdition by the superior devotion and skill of this young stranger rival.

Has Dante described a penal suffering more acute than Pedrillo's?

Marion, closely followed by Gertrude, soon reached the extremity of the ledge. He seemed not even to perceive the danger from which Pedrillo had retreated. Emilie was not conscious of his approach till he pronounced her name. She then looked towards him with speechless agony. Her deathly paleness, the nervous convulsion of her features, and the tremulous motion of her whole body struck a panic to his heart. His eye turned to Gertrude. "Oh, God!" he murmured. His voice and look expressed his utter despair.

"Be calm," she replied; "we can save her—I am sure of it—only be firm. Emilie—Emilie," she added, in an almost cheerful voice, "be resolute for one minute more, and you will be safe." Again Emilie turned

her head, and still she looked like a dying victim on the rack. Gertrude did not venture to raise her eye to her. With the inspiration of heroic courage and devotion, she bent her whole mind to the action. Not a thought was spared to fear or danger. "You see," she said to Marion, taking her hands from the rock, and standing upright with a careless freedom of attitude, "you see I have ample space for my feet. I stand with as perfect security here as on a parlour floor. Here, too, are some twigs above me, by which I can hold. My position is firm and safe. "You,"—she continued, depressing her voice to the lowest audible tone—"you have a narrow, precarious foothold; but by grasping my hand you may secure your balance. Now consider how you can get Emilie where we are."

Gertrude's self-possession and intrepidity inspirited Marion. "We can save her," he exclaimed, "if she will let us. Do you speak to her—I cannot."

"My dear Emilie," she said, "the danger is already past, if you will think so. Fix your eyes on us, and mind Mr. Marion's

directions." The poor girl felt already the inspiration of hope. She did as she was directed; and, as she turned her face towards them, they perceived she was much less frightfully pale and agitated. Marion gave one hand to Gertrude, and extending the other, "Place your feet," he said, "Emilie, in my hand. It is as firm as if it were braced with irons—keep your hands upon the rocks—they will support and balance you. One single yard from this spot, and you will be in perfect safety." Once Emilie advanced her foot, and withdrew it. "Do not draw back, Emilie," cried Gertrude and Marion in one breath—"do not draw back—fear nothing—keep hold of the twigs till your feet are firmly placed." She did so—they retreated one step. Marion's hand was firm and unbending as adamant—another step—and another, and Marion slowly depressed his hand, and Emilie's feet were on the rock, on the same level with his. Not one word was spoken. He placed his arm around her, and thus sustained her, trembling like an aspen leaf, to the platform, and there she sank on his bosom,

and both lost all thought and feeling, save an obscure but most delicious consciousness of safety and love! How long they remained thus they knew not. What mortal art can measure or define such movements? They seem to partake of the immortal essence of the high feeling infused into them—to belong to eternity.

Gertrude had passed the platform, and gone to meet her father, whom she saw approaching. In his arms she was now folded, receiving all the expression he could give to his joy, and pride, and gratitude, and love.

Pedrillo had withdrawn a little from the platform, and though he still stood near Emilie and Marion, they were unconscious of his proximity. With a feeling that she was now all his own, Marion imprinted a kiss on her brow. Pedrillo started forward. "Miss Layton," he exclaimed, in a voice of passion, "have you forgotten?" — He paused. If the rocks had yawned to engulf her, Emilie would not have been more shocked. She became as agitated as when she hung over the abyss. A more dreadful abyss was present to her imagination. She

shrank away from Marion, and covered her face with her hands.

"What is the meaning of this impertinent intrusion?" demanded Marion.

"Impertinent!" retorted Pedrillo; "and what name do you give, sir, to the advantage you have taken of the accidental service rendered to my affianced wife?"

There was an assurance in Pedrillo's voice and manner that left little to be hoped. Marion turned a look on Emilie that said every thing—he spoke but one word, "Emilie?"

"It is all true," she replied.

"Would to God, then, we had perished together!"

A check was now put upon the expression of the excited feeling of all parties. Mr. Clarence approached. Emilie's face was covered, and leaning on Miss Marion's shoulder, who, half comprehending, and fully pitying her, sustained her in her arms. "My poor little Emilie," said Mr. Clarence, tenderly embracing her; "I do not wonder you cannot get over this dreadful fright. We must get you home to your mother.

Where's Marion? Ah, there he goes, running away from our compliments. It was a knightly feat, but he should not withdraw till the 'fair ladye' is in her bower again."

And how to get the ladies to their bower again was the next consideration; but as this was achieved by ordinary means, we shall not detain our readers with the details.

The ladies were all, of course, compelled by Mr. Clarence's tender watchfulness over their health to retire for repose. Gertrude was relieved from a vain attempt to compose her spirits, by an urgent request from Mrs. Layton that she would come to her room. She received her with extravagant demonstrations of joy and tenderness. Flattering as they were, they awakened a passing query in Gertrude's mind why the pleasure that was so fervent had been so long deferred. "My precious Gertrude," began Mrs. Layton, after the first greetings were over, "you may have some faint idea how much I have suffered for the last ten days, from the fact of my not being able to see you. It is hard for one who has Heaven's chartered freedom of mind, to be bound by

the stern fatalism of circumstances. I can only allude to certain affairs. If I were at liberty I should open my heart to you, Gertrude, of all persons in the world; but you already know enough from my poor Em' to imagine my relief from having the evil day put off."

"Thank Heaven," exclaimed Gertrude, "it is then put off."

"Of course—Pedrillo is unable to move—what a frightful predicament poor Em' was in, on those rocks! and she tells me, you behaved so sweetly, Gertrude. By the way, dearest, do tell me something of this young Marion who enacted the hero to-day—rather officiously, I think—I am provoked that he should thrust himself forward, and deprive Pedrillo of such an opportunity of rendering Emilie a romantic service." Gertrude inferred, from the light tone in which Mrs. Layton spoke of the affair, that she was not at all aware of Emilie's hair-breadth escape, and she described the frightfulness of her danger, Pedrillo s attention to his own safety, and Marion's devotion to the single object of Emilie's preservation. Mrs. Lay-

ton listened with great apparent interest, expressed her surprise that Emilie had been so incommunicative, and concluded by saying, she supposed the poor child had been scared out of her wits. "She scarcely spoke to me after her return; and said, she should lie down in her own room, and begged not to be disturbed—she is taking an honest nap, I have no doubt—she is just like her father—I should not have slept for a month, after such an affair. Well, it is fortunate for her, that she has so little imagination. It will make small difference to her, who enacts the hero—she is not like you and me, Gertrude; she never will suffer the sad, sad experience of a heart of sensibility, its cravings, its yearnings, its unbounded desires, its vain regrets.—No, no, Emilie's life will flow on, as the scripture has it, like still waters in green pastures."

"Oh, Mrs. Layton, I am afraid your expectations are too sanguine. Her childhood has been serene, but, to pursue your figure, the stream that is destined to frightful precipices, may hold its infant course through flowery and still pastures."

"It may; but we are misled, by talking figuratively. The fact is, I see, (for I am not blinded by maternal affection,) I see that Emilie is a *médiocre* character; if she were not, would not her own beauty excite her more? She will just live *even on*, content with what would be, to you and me, perfect stagnation, ordinary connubial life—it is a safe, but certainly, not a very alluring destiny. Believe me, dearest, married life rarely affords much excitement to the sensibilities, or scope to the imagination."

Gertrude shrank from expressing her maiden meditations on this subject. They were high and romantic, or might be called so, by those who are fond of affixing that doubtful epithet to the aspirations of those, who modify their hopes by the capabilities of our race, rather than graduate them by its history. Mrs. Layton guessed her thoughts; "My sweet friend," she said, "I see your mental revoltings from my views of life. Mine are the result of my peculiar position; I am not a philosopher, and my opinions are deduced from individual experience; so, do not let me cast the shadows of my past over

the bright field of your future. We will not talk of shadows; I feel particularly light-hearted. As I said before, the evil day, which God knows I have done all I could to avert, is at any rate deferred. Pedrillo has too much respect for the graces, to go hobbling to the hymeneal altar. I shall have time to recruit my spirits; and poor Em', to cultivate a more tender sentiment for her suitor. Indeed, I think he ought to excite it; he is uncommonly elegant, and a foreigner; and that is, after all, an advantage *dans les petites affaires du cœur.* The men of our country, particularly our northern country, are so deficient in all the embellishments—the mysterious, indescribable little arts, that excite the imagination! they are upright and downright—and have such a smack of home about them. If they reach the heart, it is by the turnpike-road of common sense, not by the obscure, devious, mysterious, but delicious avenue of the imagination. You agree with me, at least you feel with me, Gertrude?"

"I am listening to you, but I really have no opinion on the subject; I have seen so little of society, that I have made few com-

parisons. My predilection, I confess, is in favour of my own countrymen; they may have a less polished exterior, but they seem to me to have more independence of manner, more naturalness, and simplicity."

"Certainly, they have—but less of these prime qualities than savages—you smile, but you will think with me, when you have passed a winter in town—the thing I have set my heart on. By the way, poor Louis Seton! Gertrude a *sentiment* is so necessary to us; so much is it, as has been said, the 'history of a woman's life,' that, shut up, as you have been, at Clarenceville, with this 'man of feeling,' I am amazed you have escaped something more serious than a passing *tendresse*. Now, no protestations—susceptibility is absolutely essential to an attractive woman. But come, dearest, one of my reasons, though the least urgent, for sending for you, was, to beg you to present me to these Marions. It is incumbent on me to make my acknowledgments to our knight of the rocks."

The ladies proceeded together to the parlor, and there learned, to Gertrude's mortifi-

cation, and Mrs. Layton's well-concealed satisfaction, that the Marions had taken their final departure from the 'rural resort" half an hour before. A servant gave Miss Clarence a note from Miss Marion; it ran as follows:

"My dear Miss Clarence—I have forborne "to disturb your repose after your perilous "adventure, to announce our abrupt depar-"ture. Accident introduced you into our "family cabinet, and as you are apprized of "its secrets, you will not wonder at poor "Randolph's feelings, in consequence of the "disclosures of to-day. My heart pleads for "Emilie, but my reason tells me, that it is "wisest, discreetest, best, to shun any far-"ther intercourse with so beautiful a crea-"ture, who is so careless of obligations and "consequences. Depend on it, Miss Cla-"rence, I am right in my opinion of the "mother; and though I grieve to say it, "poor Emilie has bad blood in her veins. I "am sustaining the part of a rigid moralist "with Randolph, while my womanish heart "is melting within me. I cannot regard the 'sweet girl in any other light, than as a

"victim—the faults of seventeen are not "deliberate—but I talk as sternly to Ran- "dolph, as if I were Junius Brutus. In "compliance with a kind invitation from "your father, we have promised to visit "Clarenceville, on our return from Niagara.

"Till then, adieu, my dear Miss Clarence,

"And allow me to be
"your friend and admirer,
"A. MARION."

Pedrillo was on a sofa in the parlour, when the ladies entered; and while Gertrude was reading her note, he and Mrs. Layton were carrying on a subdued, but impassioned conference; the result of which was a request from Mrs. Layton, that Miss Clarence would do her the favour to request Emilie, provided she found her awake and sufficiently recovered, to make her appearance in the parlour.

Gertrude found her friend neither sleeping, nor recovered; but sitting in a most disconsolate attitude, bending over an open letter, which she had drenched with her

tears. " Oh, Gertrude!" she said, " look at this—is it not cruel?" It was from Marion, and began with the text of all disappointed lovers: " Frailty thy name is " woman! Must I apply this condemna- " tion to Emilie Layton? Why have I " lived to find that she, whom my devoted " love invested with perfection, is capable " of deliberate coquetry. Am I in my " senses? Could Emilie Layton, she who " appeared full of all kind and gentle " thoughts, could she, on the eve of mar- " riage with another, trifle with a heart " she knew was all her own? She has " done so—your own lips, Emilie, have " confessed the truth — your vows *are* " plighted to another—it is not slander " —it is not a dream—again and again I " repeat the first prayer of my pierced soul, " ' would that we had perished together!' " But my sister waits for me; she talks of " recovered tranquillity—but what tran- " quillity can be in reversion for him who " bears in his bosom a poisoned shaft— " the bitter remembrance of her unworthi- " ness, to whom he would have devoted his

" existence; for whom he would have en-
" countered death itself, without a pang?
" Farewell, Emilie—farewell for ever.
" R. MARION."

Gertrude quite forgot the errand on which she had come to Emilie, in her efforts to console her. " I should care for nothing else in the wide world," said the poor girl, " if Randolph only knew how innocent I have been."

" That he may know in future, Emilie, but at present ——"

" Oh, I know I must not vindicate myself —I must suffer, and suffer in silence, and if my heart breaks I must not tell him that I loved him—loved him with far truer love than his; for I never would have believed any evil of him. I did not know till now—indeed, Gertrude, I did not, that I loved Randolph. I knew that I was always thinking of him, but I did not know *that* was love. I knew that I felt restless away from him, even with you, and happy if I were but near him without speaking, and without hearing his voice; but I did not know *that*

was love. Even on that dreadful rock, Gertrude, I felt that I had rather be swallowed up in the abyss than be saved by Pedrillo, when Randolph was so near to me ; and yet I did not know *that* was love. But when Mr. Pedrillo claimed me, and Randolph pronounced my name, then the whole truth flashed on me ; and yet I had better die than speak the one true word to Randolph. And with this on my heart I must go to the altar with Mr. Pedrillo—and very soon too—mamma hinted that to-day."

"Not soon, Emilie—perhaps never. Mr. Pedrillo was maimed on the rocks, and he has himself deferred the marriage."

"Thank heaven ! but what reason is there, Gertrude, to hope this detested marriage may never take place ?"

"Every thing future, Emilie, is uncertain—every thing—but that, if you disclose to your mother the actual state of your feelings, she will herself break off this engagement."

"Never—never, Gertrude. Mamma has reasons that she does not tell me. She

never would have made me write that solemn promise to papa, if it were not *necessary* to perform it. I do not know how I could do it, only that I always have to do every thing that mamma wishes. Mamma was so sure I should like Mr. Pedrillo, and I thought she knew best. I did not hate him then—but now the very thought of him makes me shiver."

"Gertrude was well aware that Mrs. Layton would not wish Emilie to show herself to Pedrillo in her present state of mind, and, after ministering all possible consolations to her, she undertook to make her apology to her mother. She received it with the best grace possible. Not so Pedrillo. His cup of irritations was full, and one added drop made it overflow. He wrought himself first into a passion, and then into a fever, which produced so violent an inflammation in his wounded limb, that on the following morning the physician gave his professional opinion that the gentleman might be detained at Trenton several weeks. In this state of affairs Mrs. Layton felt her position to be rather awkward, and she and

Emilie, after a tender parting with Gertrude, took their departure for New York.

Mr. Clarence and Gertrude were still detained at Trenton for some weeks. Seton's convalescence was slow and imperfect, and his melancholy continued, like an incubus, in spite of all their efforts to alleviate it. When his health was sufficiently restored to bear a removal, Mr. Clarence proposed that, instead of returning to Clarenceville, he should proceed to New York, and there embark for Italy, where, in a genial climate, and in the pursuit of his art, he might regain his health and happiness. Mr. Clarence, who seemed always to regard his fortune as a trust for others, assured him that he should place at his disposal a sum that would render his residence abroad easy and respectable. Seton heard him without reply, but with evident emotion.

On the following morning they were to leave Trenton. Seton did not appear at breakfast. Mr. Clarence went to his room, and found that he had gone, and left a note addressed to him. It was full of expressions of gratitude and tenderness to Mr.

Clarence and Gertrude; but it was most afflicting to see that those sentiments, whose essence seems to be happiness, were so transmuted in his distempered mind, that sweet fountains distilled bitter waters.

"Why," he said, "seek to prolong a burdensome existence? He was a weed driven on the tempestuous waves—the idle sand blown over the desert of life. He cast a blight on every thing about him." The note was written in the deepest despondency, and concluded with a request that no inquiry might be made after him, and a most affecting and eternal farewell.

This request was so far from being complied with, that Mr. Clarence instituted the most assiduous inquiries. He traced him to Utica, but no farther. His family connections knew nothing of him, and Mr. Clarence and Gertrude were driven to the horrible conclusion that he had committed the last act of despair.

CHAPTER IV.

> "I'll no say men are villains a':
> The real harden'd wicked,
> Wha hae nae check but human law,
> Are to a few restricted." BURNS.

PEDRILLO's detention at Trenton was protracted day after day, and week after week. His inflammatory constitution, and impatient temper, acted reciprocally upon each other; and a wound that, with a tranquil temperament would, by the process of nature, have been cured in a week, produced a suffering and languishing sickness. So surely and dreadfully are physical evils aggravated by moral causes, that those who would enjoy a sound body, should cherish a sound mind.

He passed the weary hours in alternately execrating poor little Triton, as the cause of

his accident, and then caressing him as the only solace of his solitude; in cursing his own ill-luck, waterfalls, country-doctors—in short, every thing that had the most innocent relation to his misfortune. Time at last did its beneficent work, and, late in the autumn, Pedrillo returned to New York, without a blemish on his fine person.

A few weeks had wrought a sad change in Emilie. The careless, irrepressible joy of youth was gone; her manners had the indifference and langour of those whose interests in life are paralyzed by use and time; the bloom had faded from her cheek, and was only replaced by the exquisite, but transient hue of feeling. Her eyes were habitually cast down, as if to shelter from observation the secret sorrow that was betrayed in their tender melancholy. She submitted to the fate that awaited her, without any other remonstrance, or repining, than the mute signs we have described, which should indeed have spoken daggers to her parents. She began to fancy herself callous to the future. 'Why should she care what became of her?' thus she reasoned—'if Randolph Marion no

longer cared for her; and she was sure that he did not, nor in any circumstances ever would.'

She had seen him once since his unkind parting at Trenton. He, and his sister, passed through New York, on their way to Virginia, and she accidentally encountered them in a shop. Randolph bowed coldly; Miss Marion, always kind, in and out of rule, addressed her with cordiality; but a cordiality so flurried, that it betrayed its meaning. She said that they were hurrying through town, and made some apology for not calling to see her, which, like most such apologies, only augmented the embarrassment it was meant to allay. Emilie did not distinctly comprehend a word Miss Marion said—she did not know whether she replied or not. She was only conscious that Randolph was standing near her, and was, as she thought, in the coolest manner possible, discussing with the shop-keeper the quality of some French cravats. Once she looked towards him, (she could not help it,) but his eye was averted, and she hastened away, to bewail in secret the injustice and incon-

stancy of man, and the hard fate of woman, destined to love on without requital, and to suffer without sympathy.

In the mean time, Mrs. Layton flowed down the current of life, with her usual habits of self-indulgence and expense. She maintained her intimacy with Gerald Roscoe; an intimacy that might have degenerated into a *liaison* of a more doubtful nature, in circumstances where moral restraints are less salutary, and severe, and pervading, and the eye of the public less vigilant, than in our fortunate country. We would not insinuate that Mrs. Layton had any more vicious propensity than a love for admiration; but what is more corrupting than an insatiable passion for admiration? an unextinguishable love of coquetry? They can only be gratified by influencing the imagination, through the medium of the passions; and a woman, a wife, a mother, who maintains this most unholy despotism, has already sacrificed the fine spirit of virtue. We would be the last to impeach the virtue of our hero, but it was human, and therefore, needed to be fortified against temptation. There is

something very flattering to the vanity of a young man in the preference of a woman of experience; if that experience is set off and enriched by talent and beauty; if manners lend the aid of their almost omnipotent charm, and a brilliant and piquant conversation nourishes a distaste to common society.

Roscoe's mother had watched the progress of his acquaintance with Mrs. Layton, with great solicitude. She never attempted to govern his conduct by maternal authority, but wisely contented herself with the sure and silent influence of her affections, and sentiments. She believed that no virtue could have much vigour or merit, that was not free and independent in its operation; and, though her solicitude never slept, she suffered her son (we use the expression without irreverence) 'to work out his own salvation.'

She never exacted sacrifices to her opinion, and he was never reserved in his confidence; so that, to the tie of nature, was added the charm of voluntary friendship.

Mrs. Roscoe perceived that Gerald's ro-

mantic encounter with the stranger of Trenton-falls had left a deep impression on his imagination—we cannot say on his heart, though his mother thought that it was like ground broken up, and richly seeded, and only awaiting a farther, genial, external influence. She sympathized with all the mystery and excitement of the adventure, for she was a true woman; and so far it was a matter of feeling; but in her willing recurrence to the theme of that adventure, she had some reference to the art of the physician, who exterminates one disease, by infusing another. Gerald was at the age of sentiment, and she believed that weeds would best be extirpated by the growth of a preference, congenial to the pure and ardent mind of her son. This might prove an air-built castle at last, but it was raised by hope and love, on a base of truth.

It was not long after Pedrillo's return to town, that a singular coincidence happened in the Layton family.

The husband and wife were both at home on the same evening, and in the parlor *tête-à-tête*. Layton was stretched on the sofa,

and his wife at her piano, singing a popular Italian song. "You should never attempt Italian music, Mrs. L.," said the husband. She sang on. "It requires some assurance to sing that air, after hearing the Signorina Garcia." Still her voice was unfaltering. "My dear Mrs. L., you deserve a place in Matthews' nightingale club.—— Good Lord! Mrs. L., do stop—I shall have neither ears nor nerves left." Mrs. Layton was still deaf. If 'a soft answer turneth away wrath,' there is nothing kindles it like no answer at all. Layton felt himself insulted by his wife's passiveness. He thrust the poker into the grate, threw over the shovel, and succeeded in forcing his wife from the piano with his terrible discords. She retreated, however, without the slightest discomposure, and, when her husband had resumed his position, on the sofa, and she had seated herself opposite to him, she asked him, with as much *nonchalance* as if she had referred to any historical truth, "Do you remember, Layton—I think it was the very day after we were engaged—do you remember your shedding tears at

my singing a little Scotch air; do you remember?" He made no reply. "Orpheus' miracle was nothing to mine; he only made the *rocks move.*"

"But your age of miracles is past, Mrs. L." —Mrs. Layton could bear any thing with more philosophy than an allusion to her age, but even that, *from her husband*, could not ruffle her temper, or rather disturb her command of it. "Do you remember," she continued, "my poor father saying, 'this is nothing, Grace, but try ten years hence if you can draw tears from your husband's eyes?'"

"God knows," muttered Layton, "you have done that often enough, but not by *music.*"

"And yet there are those that tell me, even now when I sing,

'That Ixion seems no more his pain to feel,
But leans attentive on the standing wheel.'"

"Yes—but your Ixion is not in the *infernum* of matrimony. It was Gerald Roscoe, I fancy, who made this famous speech to you?" The lady did not reply. Layton

whistled, but it was any thing but the Lilla-bullero from the gentle soul of my uncle Toby. Both parties were silent for the space of half an hour.

"A devilish agreeable time we are having," said Layton.

"I will give you something to make it more—or less agreeable," replied his wife. She rang the bell—ordered the servant to bring down her writing-desk—took from it a roll of papers, and threw them to her husband. He opened them, looked at one after another, and between each uttered certain exclamations that express surprise and anger in the most laconic form—threw them all aside, and strode up and down the room.

"There are besides," said Mrs. Layton, "some unwritten accounts, which, while your hand is in, you may as well settle. The children's school-bills—music, dancing, &c. for the last two quarters—Justine's wages since May, and," yawning, "really I do not recollect, but my impression is, there are a mass of them."

"A mass of them—and where am I to get money to pay them?"

"Indeed, I do not know; ce n'est pas mon affaire."

"And what under heaven is your affair, but to involve me in debt after debt, without care, and without remorse?"

"If I have no remorse for contracting debts, I think I should feel some if I were to adopt certain modes of paying them."

"What do you mean by that insinuation?" demanded Layton, turning fiercely round upon his wife.

"Oh, nothing—nothing—but that I should scarcely have the heart to pay my debts by marrying my child to"——

"To whom?—to what? speak out."

"Well then, if I must speak out—to a villain."

"A villain! have a care, madam—what right have you to call Pedrillo a villain?"

"I believe him to be so."

"On what authority?"

"The best authority."

Nothing was farther from Mrs. Layton's intentions when she first retorted her husband's reproaches, than to involve herself in the necessity of imparting the communica-

tion she had received from Gerald Roscoe at Trenton. This she knew to be dishonourable in relation to Roscoe, and besides, she meant to maintain the advantage of apparent ignorance of the worse than doubtful character of Emilie's lover. But the pleasure of recrimination overcame her prudence, and she had committed herself so far that she was obliged to proceed, and confess that Roscoe had confided to her the story of the little French girl, and had moreover told her, that there were suspicions abroad that Pedrillo had been connected with a desperate band of men on the South American coast.

Layton flew into the most unbridled passion, cursed her informer as an intermeddler, and the inventor of a tale which he professed utterly to disbelieve—threw out intimations of real or affected jealousy of Roscoe, and concluded by saying, that whatever was the reputation—whatever was the real character of Pedrillo, they were too deeply involved with him to retract. This Mrs. Layton believed, and felt that she had unwittingly given her husband the vantage ground. He had made the contract of Emilie's marriage,

as he professed, with faith in Pedrillo's integrity. She had acquiesced in it, believing in his depravity. He reproached her with this. She alleged in defence his command, and the reasons he had assigned for that command. He retorted unqualified reproaches. She received them in apathetic silence, evincing that if she were not invulnerable, he at least could not wound her. This conjugal scene was broken up by a signal that lays many a foul domestic fiend—the ringing of the door-bell. Mrs. Layton retired to her own apartment, and Pedrillo was introduced.

He had come on business, and fortunately, as he said, had for once found Mr. Layton, and found him alone. After very concise preliminaries, he said, with the air of one who has a right to command, that he had decided his marriage should take place in January. The dictatorial manner in which he announced his determination would, at any time, have been offensive to Layton's pride, but it was more than he could bear in his present irritated state. He replied that no one had a right to dictate his domestic arrangements—that it still de-

pended on his will whether the marriage took place, or not.

"Does it so?" asked Pedrillo tauntingly. "What has so suddenly changed the aspect of our relations?"

"The rein and the whip," replied Layton, "may change hands."

Pedrillo demanded an explanation, and Layton gave it, without alleviating with a doubt the dark tale he unfolded. When he had professed to disbelieve it, he shared the responsibility of the imputed guilt with Pedrillo. He now devolved the whole weight on the shoulders of his principal, and he had no longer a motive to lighten it. Pedrillo admitted in full the affair at Abeille's, and treated it as a mere bagatelle—a matter of course in the life of a man of the world. The more serious charge he asserted was an entire fabrication—invented by Roscoe in revenge of his superior success with the French girl—the revenge of a jealous and discomfited rival; or, if not invented by him, it was an idle rumor to which any stranger was liable, and to which Roscoe had malignantly attempted to give

force and credibility. He was perfectly cool, and self-possessed; and poor Layton, like the insect that struggles for a moment to extricate himself from the meshes of his enemy, became more passive and helpless than ever. Pedrillo was not of a temper to remain satisfied with simply eluding a blow. He returned it with a poisoned shaft. His defeat at Abeille's had been rankling in his bosom ever since, but he could not resent it without bringing the affair to light, and risking an inauspicious influence on his suit to Emilie. He dared not pick a quarrel with Roscoe, lest it should lead to investigations that might prove inconvenient. A channel for his resentment was now opened. With the nice art of a superior mind, he adapted himself precisely to the dimensions and force of the instrument with which he was to operate. He made Layton feel, and feel to his heart's core, that their interests were identified—that they must sink or swim together; and therefore that it was quite as important to his interest as it could be to his (Pedrillo's) to repel Roscoe's

charges. Roscoe was next made to appear in the light of an officious, impertinent intermeddler in Layton's domestic affairs. He insinuated that Roscoe had good reasons for cherishing that contempt for her husband which Mrs. Layton did not scruple on any occasion to manifest. From insinuations he proceeded to accusations. He said Roscoe's visit to Trenton was only a part of a system of devotion, to which Layton alone was blind. He magnified Roscoe's little gallantries—recalled his forgotten attentions, and gave to them meaning and importance; and finally filled Layton's confused and darkened mind with images of wrong and insult.

Love is not so often as self-love the parent of jealousy. Layton's pride was wounded, not his affections; and that combined with his consciousness of guilt, and his secret rankling hatred of Pedrillo, to work him up to a welding heat; and Pedrillo perceived that he might give what form he pleased to the expression of the unhappy man's passions,—when their conference was interrupted by the entrance of a visitor.

Mr. Layton was in no humour to be broken in upon. "Did not I tell you, Andrew," he said to the servant, "that I was not at home?"

"Oh, don't scold at Andrew!" said the visitor, Mr. Flint, a man of peace and invincible good nature. "He told me you were not at home, but I came in with a little errand from Mr. Roscoe to Mrs. Layton."

"You did, did you! You are a particular friend of Mr. Roscoe's—are you not?"

Mr. Flint had a decided partiality for intimacies with those who were graduated a little above him, on the scale of gentility, and he answered, unhesitatingly, and with a smile not in the least checked by Layton's rude and hurried manner, "that he was a *very* intimate friend of Mr. Roscoe's."

"Then, sir, you will be kind enough to take back an errand to Mr. Roscoe; and tell him, from me, that he is a scoundrel."

"Why, Mr. Layton! I declare I—I don't understand you, sir."

"Tell him then, that he is a d——d impertinent, lying scoundrel. If *he* does not

understand me, he may send you back for an explanation."

"That's no message for one gentleman to carry to another, Mr. Layton; and I must be excused, sir." Flint began to suspect that Layton was heated with wine; and he added, "if you have any real offence with Mr. Roscoe, wait till to-morrow; a reasonable resentment won't work off in a night, and an unreasonable one will disappear with your dreams."

"Reserve your advice, sir, for your friend; he will probably need it. Will you be the bearer of my message?"

"No, sir, excuse me—I have no fancy for carrying about fire-brands, especially, to throw in my friend's bosom. Good night, sir. I really advise you to be considerate—good night." He went out, but instantly returned. "Ah! Mr. Pedrillo, I forgot—I put that little wax head of my father into my pocket, to show to you—here it is."

Pedrillo took it, bit his lips, and turned around to hold the image to the light; and as he did so, he let it fall on the hearth-

stone, and broke it to fragments. "God bless me! Mr. Flint, I beg your pardon."

"You are very excusable, sir, but—but I had as lief you had broken my head."

On the same night, after his return to his lodgings, Pedrillo wrote a letter to a friend in the West Indies, from which the following passages are extracted. "After all, I "may have made a false play; finessed to "my own loss: however, I am sure R. has "no proof to substantiate his story; and, "as we sons of fortune well know, there is "a great gulf between suspicion and proof. "Still, I may have made a false step; for "though I would like to pay off all scores "to that driveller, by Layton's hand, a duel "is an uncertain mode of revenge; and if "L. gets the worst of it, which he may, "though a famous shot, I am dished. My "adorable submits in holy obedience to the "fiat of her father. If this is withdrawn, "(thanks to my stars! death alone can "withdraw it,) I shall lose her. By heaven! "Felix, the very thought of it makes every "drop of blood in my body rush to my "brain.

"But I will not lose her! Did I ever "relinquish any thing on which I had fixed "my grasp?

"I once knew a boy—he had lived scarce "thirteen years in this wicked world, when "a drover, returning from market, with a "full purse, stopped at his father's house, "an inn, no matter where. In the dead of "night, the boy stole to the drover's room, "with a butcher's knife, recently whetted, "in one hand. He slept so soundly, though "the broad moon shone in his face, that "the boy secured the purse without using "the knife. But it proved not useless. "The boy's father had suspected, and fol-"lowed him; and, while he was retreating "backwards, his eye still fixed on the drover, "his father grasped the purse; the boy was "no match for him in strength: in daring, "he was a match for the devil; he could "not extricate the purse by force; he raised "the other hand, and gave a single effective "stroke with the knife. The bloody fingers "(his father's!) relaxed their hold; the boy "retained the purse, mounted a prepared "horse, and made his escape. Think you

"that a spirit kindred to that boy's, and "fortified with the sinews and muscle of a "man, will relinquish an object on which "his soul is fixed?

"I shall achieve a victory over this fellow, "Roscoe, whether he fight or not. But he "will fight; there is nothing in life a young "man fears so much as the scorn and ridi- "cule of his companions; and though Ros- "coe takes a high tone, and has the reputa- "tion of spirit, (which, by the way, any "man of his inches, muscle, erect bearing, "and flashing eye, may get,) yet he will "not dare encounter the suspicion of sneak- "ing. And yet he will, and he knows it, "lose character by fighting. A duel is a "ticklish affair in this part of the world; "discreditable with all but the independent "corps who have broken the shackles of "society, and the very young men who rant "about the 'code of honour,' their 'fine "sensibilities,' and such trash. Still, I think "he will not dare refuse the challenge. "I shall hang him on this horn of the "dilemma.

"I meet ——— constantly. He has not

" the slightest suspicion; how should he
" have? he is scarce five and twenty; yet I
" dread and hate the sight of him. This
" evening he showed me a resemblance of
" *his* father, moulded in wax—it *was* like
" me. I crushed that likeness, and all form
" of humanity out of it.

" I am impatient to get away from this
" country; they have a way of their own,
" of inquiring out every thing. Those only
" who can afford to bear the scrutiny, should
" live among them. I meant to return
" to Cuba, as soon as I should have secured
" the funds in the hands of ——, but
" the thread of destiny has been strangely
" spun about me; and I sometimes think
" that my cradle and my grave—Pshaw,
" this is drivelling."

CHAPTER V.

"But where you feel your *honor* grip,
  Let that aye be your border,
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
  Debar a' side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
  Uncaring consequences."—Burns.

"Mother," said Gerald Roscoe, on the following morning, as he was going out to his office, "I expect a note from Mrs. Layton, about attending her to the Theatre; be kind enough to open it, and if it requires an answer, send it to me." In the course of the morning, the note came. Mrs. Roscoe opened it. Instead of the expected contents, it ran as follows:—"To Gerald Roscoe, Esq." "Sir, your interference in my family affairs "deserves some notice on my part. Your

"devotion to the *mother*, is not of a nature
"to require that you should interest your-
"self in the *morals* of the lover of the
"daughter. I requested your intimate
"friend D. Flint, last night, to tell you,
"from me, that you were an impertinent,
"meddling, lying scoundrel. I now repeat
"it—and am ready to give you the
"satisfaction of a gentleman, or to publish
"the above character to the world, with
"the addition of coward. Choose your al-
"ternative.

"JASPER LAYTON."

Mrs. Roscoe read, and read again the note, and felt as a mother must feel who sees the life and reputation of her son menaced. Her first impulse, as soon as her agitation had so far subsided as to enable her to form a purpose, was to go immediately to Layton; to convince him that he was under some fatal mistake (for this she never for a moment doubted); and to intreat him, for her sake, to revoke his note. But, on second thoughts, her good sense, her pride, and just confidence in her son, revolted from this feminine

procedure. 'Gerald shall not,' she thought, 'be saved by the cowardly shield of his mother!' She then sat down and wrote him a note, saying, that 'the time had come to test the firmness of his principles;' that in all their conversations on the dreadful crime of duelling, he had admitted that it was contrary to the plainest dictates of reason, and a violation of the law of God. It was enough to remind him of this; she would not urge any inferior considerations. If he were not governed by his duty to Heaven, she would not ask him to be influenced by his love to her—by her dependence on him.'

She abstained from expressing an emotion of tenderness, or of fear. 'I will not shackle him,' she said; 'but have I not already? Will not the fact of my being privy to the note embarrass him? My noble-minded son, I will trust you.' And, without allowing herself time to shrink from her resolve, she threw her own note into the fire, resealed Layton's so carefully that Gerald could not suspect its having been opened, and sent it to his office. Perhaps this was rash comi-

dence—it certainly would have been, if she had any reason to doubt the strength of his principles, or the firmness of his character; but she trusted to something stronger than her own influence, to something more unerring in its guidance and decision than her opinion—the enlightened conscience of her son.

She knew that men, all men, are jealous, and rightly so, of the interference of women in matters that do not properly come under their cognizance. She knew that they do not allow even their just weight to feminine scruples and doubts, because they believe them to have their source in constitutional timidity. Did she not then act with prudence, as well as true delicacy, in leaving the whole affair where it exclusively belonged, in the hands of her son?

But, though she had wrought her mind up to this pitch of resolution and forbearance, she was a prey to the anxieties and tormenting imaginations, so natural to her sex. 'Gerald may be influenced by some hotheaded adviser—the principle that seems strong in the hour of reason, calm discussion,

and meditation, is insufficient in the hour of passion—when pride is stung by provocation—when the voice of the world is in the ear, and the fear of God quails before that of man's ridicule. Oh, my son, if you should disappoint me!—if you should fall!—or survive, the destroyer of another!'—These thoughts, and a thousand other disjointed and thick-coming fancies agitated her, and produced a state of high nervous excitement. She heard the street door open. It was Gerald's step—some person was with him. She awaited with breathless apprehension the first glance at him—'his face will tell me all,' she thought; but, instead of entering her parlor, he passed hastily up stairs. She rang the bell. Miss Emma, the daughter of her hostess, appeared.

"Do you know who came in with Mr. Roscoe?"

"Mr. Flint. Mr. Roscoe said he had some particular business with him, and he wished not to be disturbed.—But, bless me, ma'am! are you ill?—you are very pale."

"I am not well."

"Shall I sit here for a little while? you look faint, I am afraid to leave you."

"I am not faint, but you may sit down here, Emma, if you will."

There was something sedative in the quiet girl's presence, and for a few moments Mrs. Roscoe was tranquillized; but, like other inadequate sedatives, it soon increased the irritation it should have allayed, and Mrs. Roscoe dismissed her kind attendant, saying, "My nerves are in a sad state to-day, Miss Emma; even the pricking of your needle disturbs me."

Emma did not know that Mrs. Roscoe had nerves, and she went away to relieve her wonder at seeing her in this extraordinary condition, in the natural way—by imparting it.

From that time till dinner, how heavily the hours—the minutes dragged! One might believe that duration, as philosophers have deemed of matter, was ideal, from the length or brevity imparted to it by the mind. Dinner came at its accustomed hour, and Roscoe appeared as usual to all eyes but his

mother's. She observed an unusual seriousness and abstraction, evinced by his not noticing her altered appearance, though it was repeatedly remarked by other members of the family; but when she spoke, though merely to decline a common courtesy of the table, the thrilling tone of her voice startled him.

"Are you not well?" he asked, and for an instant looked earnestly at her; but his thoughts instantly reverted to a secret anxiety, and not waiting her reply, or scarcely noticing whether she replied, he abruptly withdrew from the table, and left the house. Mrs. Roscoe retired to her own room. When summoned to tea, she was found reclining on her sofa, in a high fever. She inquired for her son. He was writing in his own room—'would she have him called?' "No," she said firmly,—and 'no,' she repeated to herself, 'he has not offered me his confidence. Oh, Heaven! if I have erred—it may be too late, even now, to repair my error!'

Those alone can enter perfectly into Mrs. Roscoe's feelings, who have garnered up their

hearts in the virtue of the individual most precious to them. This was the treasure dearer than reputation, than safety, than existence. She was no Spartan mother, and she had the common shrinking from a mortal combat; but, to do full justice to her noble and elevated spirit, it was not the personal risk she most dreaded, it was the crime of murder, in the eye of the immutable law of God—for such she deemed duelling, stripped of all the illusion that custom, false reasoning, and brilliant names, have thrown around it. Her principles, her feeling, her pride, were shocked; she had believed Gerald superior to the influences that sway common minds, and now, in the very first temptation, had he sinned against the clearest convictions of his intellect, and the strongest resolutions of his virtue—had he degraded himself to the level of a worldly and almost obsolete code of honor? But, if he had been infirm of purpose, might she not yet save him? If he had proved her confidence rash and weak, ought she not now to interpose? It was a false delicacy to surrender the sacred right of a mother! Mrs. Roscoe

did not longer balance these thoughts, but obeyed their impulse, and hastened to Gerald's apartment. He was not there. A note, directed to her, was lying on the table. It contained but a line, saying, that as he understood she was indisposed, he had not seen her, but left the note to inform her that he was obliged to go out of town on business of some importance, and might not return till the next evening.

It was then too late! and Mrs. Roscoe returned to her own room to pass the agonizing watches of a sleepless night, in vain regrets and torturing apprehension. The morning came, but it brought no relief —hour passed after hour, each sadder than the last. Every sound rang an alarm-bell to her ear, and every approaching footstep menaced her with misery. She wondered, as those do whose minds are concentrated on one harrowing thought, to see the passers-by bowing and smiling, and coolly pursuing their customary occupations, and the inmates of the house setting about their usual employments, and making preparations for dinner, as if it were worth caring about.

But the dinner—that diurnal circumstance that maintains its dignity through all the seven stages of man's life—which neither joy, nor sorrow, birth nor death, prevents—the dinner came, and by all but Mrs. Roscoe was, as usual, eaten and enjoyed. She remained in her apartment alone, meditating on the images her imagination had conjured up, when a carriage stopped at the door. Gerald was in it, pale as death, and, supported on the arm of a stranger, he was conducted into the house. Mrs. Roscoe threw open the door. "Do not be alarmed, my dear mother," said he, "I have received a trifling wound—I assure you it's nothing more;" and then, courteously thanking the stranger for the aid he had rendered him, he lay down on the sofa, and the gentleman withdrew.

Gerald threw back his cloak, and discovered his arm, from which his coat sleeve had been cut. His linen was drenched in blood. "It is a mere flesh wound," he said, "and has been already well dressed by a surgeon. There is, indeed, no occasion for your fright, my dear mother," for so he

interpreted her gaze, and colourless cheek. "You have no sickly feeling at the sight of blood—come, sit by me, and I will tell you all about it. Let me put my arm around you. I shall not, like the gallant Nelson, give you my wounded arm. Do speak to me —kiss me, mother."

All the mother had rushed to her heart at the sight of her son, alive, and safe. Joy that he was so, was the first fervent emotion of her soul. His tenderness overcame her. She sank on her knees beside him, and clasping her hands, exclaimed, "Oh God, forgive him!" and then dropping her face on his breast and bursting into tears, she added, "Gerald, how could you disappoint me so cruelly?"—An explanation followed.

As Roscoe's relation to his mother was brief, and imperfect, and as the merit of a modest man is never placed in full relief in an auto-biography, we shall resume our narrative at our hero's receipt of Layton's note. Roscoe was at a loss to conjecture what could have stimulated him to such an expression of resentment for an offence given some months before. The intimation

against Mrs. Layton, he would not for a moment admit as a solution of the mystery. 'It is possible,' he thought, 'that Flint may explain it, and, as he is alluded to, though he is not my 'intimate friend,' and not precisely the man I should have selected for my confidence, yet he is an honest fellow, and may be useful in affording me some clue.' Flint, by his request, met him at his lodgings, and as soon as they were closeted in his room, Roscoe showed him the note. Flint related what had passed the preceding evening; but this threw no light on the affair, and Roscoe, after a little farther consideration, arrived at the just conclusion that Mrs. Layton, in a moment of conjugal pique, had betrayed his interview with her at Trenton, and that Layton had been stimulated by Pedrillo to this expression of his resentment and jealousy. When Roscoe had arrived at, and communicated his conclusions to Flint, that gentleman had a hard struggle between his good nature, his real regard for Gerald Roscoe, his desire to participate in a stirring affair, and his sense of right. The latter, as it should, triumphed.

"Well," he said, "I really am sorry for you, Roscoe. I have no fear to fight myself, or back a friend, in a good cause; but one must have that, to go at it with real pluck. One must be willing to take his principal's place in all respects—that is, Roscoe—for I will be frank with you—one is supposed to approve, as well as espouse his friend's quarrel, and so I really must wash my hands of the whole affair."

"Really, my good friend, I am not aware that I have asked your participation in any *affair*—but I should like to know how I have alarmed your conscience?"

"Why, I don't like to hurt your feelings, Roscoe—but I do think it a condemned rascally business to be too attentive to another man's wife."

"If by 'too attentive' you mean, Flint, to express gallantries which afford a foundation for Layton's jealousy, I assure you, on my honour, that he has done foul injustice to his wife and to myself."

"Thank the Lord," cried Flint, rubbing his hands and pluming the wings of his active spirit for adventure, "then I'm your

man, Roscoe—we'll give 'em as good as they send. 'Impertinent lying scoundrel' indeed! The words have been ringing in my ears ever since last night. I am right glad you don't deserve a shadow of them. You must overlook my misgivings. Mrs. Layton is a very sensible lady, but then, you know, she is not a person that one feels quite sure of—and I have thought myself sometimes that she was so partial to you, it might turn your head."

"Thank you for your solicitude. A head of weightier material than mine might be made giddy by the preference of such a woman as Mrs. Layton; and that mine is not, is a proof, not of my virtue, but that she has not essayed her powers against it."

"Ah, that is very well—give the d—l his due, and a woman more than her due, is a good rule"

"For the *cour d'amour* it may be—but I speak, Flint, according to the forms of a court with which you and I are more familiar—the truth—the whole truth—and nothing but the truth."

"Well, I am glad of it. I am entirely sa-

tisfied, I warrant you. Now let us proceed to assure the gentleman he shall have the satisfaction he demands."

Roscoe was amused with the half kind-hearted, half officious, and truly characteristic eagerness with which Flint had made himself part and parcel of the whole affair; but accident had admitted him to his confidence, and he felt that there would be rather more pride than delicacy in now excluding him. "I have no intention of ever giving that satisfaction," he replied.

"What!" exclaimed Flint—and never was more surprise and amazement expressed in one word.

Roscoe calmly repeated.

"Why, Roscoe!" and he added in a tone in which he never spoke before or since—lowered and faltering, "you ar'n't *afraid*—are you?"

Roscoe smiled. "Did ever man plead guilty to such an interrogatory, Flint? I honestly believe most duellists might, and that they go out because they fear the laugh of the world, and the suspicion of cowardice, more than they fear death, or the judgment

after death. The greater fear masters the less. Moreau said, he could make any coward fight well, by making him more afraid to retreat than to advance. It is a fear paramount to my fear of the world's laugh that would compel me, in all circumstances, to refuse to fight—or rather, to express myself in terms more soothing to my self-love—that would inspire me with courage not to fight."

"Oh, I understand you now—you are afraid of killing a man."

"That would be disagreeable, Flint; but I might avoid that, you know, and I should be quite as much afraid of being killed. As to both these fears, I plead not guilty."

"Well then, for mercy's sake, what is your fear?"

"The fear of God—the fear of violating his law."

"Oh!" exclaimed Flint, with the satisfaction of one who has been scrambling through a tangled path, and suddenly emerges into the high-way, "Oh, Roscoe, I did not know you was a professor!"

Professor, with the largest part of Chris-

tians in New England, of which part of our country Mr. Flint had the honor to be a native, is the technical term for an individual who is enrolled as a member of a particular church, and has partaken its sacraments. "To be sure," he added, "you are pledged if you are a professor, and you have a perfect excuse for getting off, if you choose."

"But I shall not allege that ground of excuse, which has always seemed to me like the pretext of a boy when caught, 'I said *no play*.' And indeed I am not a *professor*, nor pledged any more than every man is who confesses himself responsible to the Supreme Being. Does not that single and almost universally admitted articleof belief require us to cherish the gift of life, and to apply it to the purposes for which it was bestowed? I honor the sentiment in which duelling originated. It is a modification of the same principle that made the martyr—the principle that truth and honor are better than life. But their application is widely different. The martyr offers his life to support what he believes to be divine truth, and in obedience to the divine law, which demands

fidelity to that truth. The duellist surrenders his life to the false and fantastical laws of the court of honor, and in direct violation of the law of Heaven."

"Well, I declare, Roscoe, I never thought of all that."

"No, my good friend, but 'all that,' and a great deal more, you, and every man of sense and just feeling, would think of, if you applied your minds to the subject before the exigency for action occurs."

"How comes it then," asked Flint, who could not at once elevate himself above the atmosphere of human authority, "how comes it then that so many great and good men have fought duels?"

"I deny that many good and great men have fought duels. Would to Heaven there had not been, most conspicuous among them, the noble name of that man, whose fine intellect, and generous affections were lavished on his country, but who threw a dreadful weight into the balance against all the good he had done her, when he gave the authority of his name to this barbarous practice."

"But I guess, Roscoe, that last act of his

life was blotted out by the tears of the recording angel, as they say."

"I hope so; but I would rather trust to its being effaced by his reluctance to yield himself to the slavery of usage, and by his deep subsequent penitence, than to the tears of the recording angel, who, since he let fall the drop on the Corporal's oath, has been made to shed such oceans over human infirmity, that the fountain must be pretty nearly exhausted."

"Well," said Flint, after a little meditation, "I believe you are right; but let me ask you one candid question, Roscoe. Don't you expect to lose reputation by refusing to fight?"

"You set me a noble example of candor in your home questions, Flint," replied Roscoe, smiling, "and I will answer you candidly, that with a certain class I do. But they happen to be those whose opinions I do not particularly value; and even if I lost reputation with the most dignified portion of society, with all society, it would not alter the merits of the question. Reputation must be graduated according to the opinions of

the community we live in—they are a party to it. My character is my own; no man can give it, and, thank God, no man can take it away—it is a sacred trust confided to me alone."

"Then it would not alter your views, if you lived in Kentucky, or Georgia?"

"Certainly not my views, for the rule that governs me is of universal authority. But I dare not assume that I should have the courage there to abide by my principles. Few men's morals are superior to the standard that obtains in the community in which they reside; and even if their theory is better, it requires more moral heroism than most men possess to put it in practice. Therefore the latitude in which a man lives should affect our estimation of the turpitude of the crime. In New York we have no such extenuation; the opinion of the enlightened is against duelling, as a most unreasonable as well as criminal practice. The good sense of the community is against it, and a man really gets no honor for an *affair*, but with a few scores of half-fledged boys, and men of doubtful principles, whose opinions or con-

duct would never be quoted on any point of morals. In New England it is even better than here. There the universal sense is against it, and there a man is disgraced by fighting a duel; and you, I think, Flint, would be the last man to pronounce your countrymen wanting in courage, or a nice sense of honour."

"That I should; and if any man accused them of it, I would"—he paused; his mind was in a new region, and he was not sure how far his friend went in rejecting all militant demonstrations.

Roscoe supplied the hiatus, "Fight them, eh! Flint?"

"No, Roscoe, I would get you to *convince* them."

"Spoken *en avocat*, my good fellow, and be assured you may command my pacific efforts at any time, in return for your offer of a hazardous service, for which I am really obliged to you."

Roscoe opened his writing desk, and Flint reluctantly took his leave to withdraw.

"I declare," he said, and with evident

sincerity, "I should like to do something about it—sha'nt I carry your note, Roscoe?"

"No, I thank you; I believe such servile offices are dignified only when done in the service of Mars."

"What do you mean to write?"

"What I should in any other case—the simple truth."

"Supposing he posts you?"

"That I can't help."

"Supposing he offers to cane you?"

"That, please Heaven, I shall help."

"And return, won't you?"

"To the very best of my ability, Flint."

"I am glad of that—I am glad of that. I was afraid you believed in non-resistance. I hope you will have a chance—good morning;" and quite satisfied, and in high good humour, he departed. He had gone quite down the stairs, when he returned, ran up to Roscoe's room, and stood with the door in his hand, saying,

"I meant to have told you that I always thought there was no reason in it; for instance, if you had wronged Layton as much

as he thinks for, what good could it do him to lose his life or take yours? I knew they didn't fight duels in New England, but I wonder I did not think of it. They are always beforchand with every improvement in New England."

"Yes," said Roscoe, bowing in token of his acquiescence in his friend's complacent nationality; "yes, Flint, the sun always rises in the east—but good morning; at this rate it will set with us before I have finished my note"—and, thus definitively dismissed, Flint took his final departure.

Gerald Roscoe's Note to Jasper Layton.

"Sir,—As duelling is, in my estimation, "a violation of the immutable law of God, "and can never be a reparation, or an atone-"ment for an injury, I should in every sup-"posable case avoid giving, and decline "receiving, the 'satisfaction of a gentleman,' "in the technical acceptation of that phrase. "Any other mode of satisfaction which a "just and honourable man may give or "require, for real or fancied injuries, I am "ready to afford you, and shall demand "from you.

"From the words which you have made "emphatic in your note, I must infer that "you have lent your ear to base insinuations "touching the honour of your wife. Be "assured, sir, that I have never presumed to "address a gallantry to Mrs. Layton, which "might not have been offered in the presence "of her husband and children.

"Your assertion that I have meddled with "your family affairs is not without founda-"tion. I did *meddle* with them so far as to "apprise Mrs. Layton of the real character "of her daughter's suitor. How far a dis-"interested effort to prevent the alliance of "your child with a man who, to my certain "knowledge, has been guilty of base con-"duct, and who lies under the suspicion of "foul crimes—how far such an effort deserves "the father's resentment, I must beg you "deliberately to estimate.

"You have bestowed on me epithets "which you will do well, for your own sake, "to recall. Thank God, I do not deserve "them, and therefore cannot, on my own "account, invest them with the slightest "importance. "Your ob^t. servant,

"G. Roscoe."

Roscoe despatched his note, and, as has been seen, joined his mother at dinner. Not suspecting she was acquainted with the affair, he did not guard against his apparent absence of mind, but suffered his thoughts to run in their natural channel. Though perfectly assured in the course he had adopted, he felt, as may be imagined, a deep interest in the effect of his note on Layton, and the final issue of the business; and he did not, it must be confessed, feel quite so composed and apathetic under the burden of the stinging epithets bestowed by Layton, as he assumed to be, or as he honestly thought he ought to be. Most men would rather die a thousand deaths, than in the eye of the world deserve such words; and though idle breath they be, and from a despised source, yet with a man of high honour and susceptible feeling, they wound more painfully than the keenest weapon.

After dinner, Roscoe as usual went to his office. He heard nothing farther from Layton. In the afternoon, he was obliged, as he had alleged to his mother, to leave town on professional business. He did not

return till the following afternoon. He was then hastily walking up town. There was, as usual at that hour of the day, a press in Broadway, and he was turning into Park-place to avoid it; when he saw Layton and Pedrillo coming toward him. He could not then proceed up the street, or stop, without evidently doing it in relation to them; and he pursued, but very slowly, the way he had intended. He heard hurried footsteps behind him. He slackened his pace, and he heard Layton say in a loud voice, "The cowardly rascal hopes to escape us."

Roscoe turned short round. "Do you mean that for me sir?" he demanded.

"Yes," replied Layton, "and I mean this for you;" and, as he spoke, he elevated a heavy cane, and aimed a blow at Roscoe; but the weapon did not touch him; he parried it, and grappled with Layton—a desperate struggle ensued. Roscoe unfortunately was embarrassed by a cloak, his foot was entangled, and he staggered backwards; Layton perceived his advantage and pressed on him with redoubled vigor; Roscoe had nearly fallen to the ground, when the fasten-

ing of the cloak gave way; it fell off, and, disencumbered, he sprang forward, and by superior strength, or skill, or coolness, succeeded in wresting the cane from Layton's hand. When the resistance of his struggle ceased, Layton recoiled several feet. Roscoe maintained his ground. Pedrillo sprang towards Layton, and gave him his cane. "Do your business quickly," he said, and added in a voice, audible only to Layton, "you are no match for him in strength—touch the spring."

Roscoe threw down the weapon which he had wrested from his adversary, (as if he disdained any other aid than the stout arm that had already achieved one victory,) and met Layton more than half way, as he advanced towards him. The passengers in the street had now taken the alarm, and were rushing towards the scene of contest. Some natural lovers of 'the fancy,' shouted 'fair play,' 'fair play,' 'take away the cane!' The possession of this weapon, however, gave Layton perhaps no more than an equality with his superior antagonist. Roscoe eluded his blow, and they again grappled. The street

now rang with the pacific cries of 'separate them!—part them!'—but before a hand could be interposed, Layton fell in the fierce encounter, and, stung with the consciousness of being a second time overcome, and maddened with passion, he obeyed Pedrillo's injunction, and touched a spring that gave an impulse to a dirk concealed in the cane. If he had willed it so, it was not possible in his hampered position to direct the weapon; fortunately the random stroke touched no vital point, but merely penetrated a fleshy part of the arm. Layton had no nerves for a bloody business; and Roscoe easily extricated the cane from his relaxing grasp, withdrew the blade from his arm, and, before it was observed, or even suspected by the spectators, that he had received a wound, he released Layton, adroitly returned the blade to its case, and the cane to his antagonist, saying in a low voice, "Guard against such accidents in future." His cloak was lying on the ground; he hastily wrapped it around him, to conceal the blood that he felt to be penetrating his garments. One of the spectators, of quicker

and cooler observation than the rest, had, from the motions of the parties, suspected foul play. He saw that Roscoe, though perfectly cool and undaunted, had the mortal paleness that is incident to a sudden loss of blood; and looking narrowly at him, he perceived the blood trickling from beneath his cloak. "The gentleman is wounded!" he cried. The mob, ever greedy of excitement, caught the words, and 'foul play!' 'foul play!' 'seize the fellow!' rang from one to another. Layton had joined Pedrillo, and, arm in arm with him, was walking away at a hurried pace, when half a dozen hands arrested him at once. "I beseech you, my friends," said Roscoe, who was now obliged to lean against an iron railing for support, "I beseech you to release that gentleman. I am sure my wound was accidental."

"Those that carry edged tools must answer for them!" shouted one.

"Yes, yes," cried another, elevating the cane he had snatched from Layton, "see here, this dirk requires a nice hand and strong pressure—off to the police office with him."

"My friends," repeated Roscoe, "I entreat you to hear me. You are doing injustice. The gentleman attacked me with a common cane; such as half a dozen among you have in your hands at this moment." He then proceeded, so earnestly and skilfully, to place the suspicious circumstance in the most favorable light for Layton, that if he did not remove all doubt, he prevented its expression, and Layton, who had suffered the severest punishment in listening to his own unmerited vindication from Roscoe's lips, was at length permitted to proceed without further molestation, and with the mortifying conviction, that he had been involved in a foolish quarrel, and set on to a cowardly revenge by Pedrillo. In the wreck of his character, there was still left enough of manly feeling to be touched by Roscoe's magnanimity; but the faint spark, that might have been cherished into life and action, was deadened by the presence of his evil genius.

Roscoe was put into a carriage, and conveyed to a surgeon's; and thence, as has been seen, to his mother's. His conduct was the general theme of the hour's ap-

plause. His physical superiority, (the want of which a mob never pardons,) gave a value and grace to his generosity. It was equally manifest that there is in the bosoms of men, the rudest, most ignorant and vulgar, a chord that responds to every unequivocal manifestation of moral superiority.

CHAPTER VI.

" Il faut briguer la faveur de ceux à qui l'on veut du bien, plûtot que de ceux de qui l'on espère du bien."

La Bruyere.

On the morning following their rencontre, Layton sent a half-apologetic letter to Roscoe. The conflict was apparent between his sense of justice and gentlemanly feeling on the one side, and his pride and humiliation on the other. Roscoe was satisfied, and heartily pitied him, but of course there could be no renewal of their intercourse. Mrs. Layton deplored the privation of Roscoe's exciting society; and after deeply considering how she could best solace herself for the loss, she addressed a letter to Gertrude

Clarence, to which the following is a reply:—

Miss Clarence to Mrs. Layton.

Clarenceville, 1st. Nov. 18—

" My dear friend—It is almost cruel of
" you to enforce your kind invitation with
" such glowing pictures of the variety and
" excitement of a winter in New York, and
" quite barbarous to ask me if I do not
" begin to feel the *ennui* of country life,
" when I am obliged to confess that I do.
" Since my return from Trenton, I have
" felt a craving that ' country contentments'
" do not satisfy. I used to go round and
" round in the same circle, and experience
" neither satiety nor deficiency. I read and
" study as usual with my father, but the
" spirit is gone. I used to find amusement
" in the occasional visits of our simple vil-
" lage friends; and could, without effort,
" manifest the expected interest in the suc-
" cess of an application for a new bank, or
" turnpike-road, or the formation of a new
" ' society.' I could listen with becoming
" attention to Col. Norton's stories of the

" revolution, though I knew them all by
" heart—to good old Mrs. Wyman's gra-
" phic details of her anomalous diseases,
" and even to your friend Mrs. Upton's
" domestic chronicles. I have ridden half
" a dozen miles to find out whether our
" pretty little busy bee, Sally Ellis, or her
" bouncing notable rival, obtained the pre-
" mium for the best flannel at the fair, and
" —dare I confess it to *you*, Mrs. Layton?—
" I have been as eager to know which of
" our rustic friends received the premiums
" of the Agricultural Society—premiums for
" *rich crops* and *fat bullocks*—as if they
" were the crowns decreed in Olympian
" games. But, alas! it is all over now—
" these things move me no longer. I have
" not opened my piano since the Marions
" left us, and my drawing, my former de-
" light, I have abandoned. It is too indis-
" solubly associated with the sad memory
" of Louis Seton. If you love me, my dear
" Mrs. Layton, spare me any farther raillery
" on this subject—I cannot bear it. I have
" known nothing in my short life so painful
" as being the accidental cause of suffering

" to a mind pure, elevated, and susceptible " as Louis Seton's; and certainly nothing " so perplexing to my faith, as that such a " mind should be doomed to misery! My " father, who is my oracle in all dark " matters, says these are mysteries of which " we must quietly await the solution—that " we are here as travellers in a strange and " misty country, where objects are seen " obscurely, and their relations and de- " pendencies are quite hidden. But we are " safe while we fix the eye of faith on the " goodness of Providence—His perfect, il- " limitable, and immutable goodness. This " is the beacon-light—the central truth of " the moral universe. I am announcing " high speculations in a very metaphysical " sort of a way; but I am as the humble " cottager who receives through her narrow " window a few rays of light—few, but " sufficient to brighten her small sphere of " duty, and to preserve her from either " faltering or fear.

" Why do I not hear from my dear " Emilie? Why are you silent in relation

" to her? Must I give the natural inter-
" pretation to this silence?

" Marion staid with us a month, and
" though we made every effort to animate
" him, his melancholy did not relax in the
" least. I wish, if you have an apt occa-
" sion, you would assure Mr. Gerald Roscoe
" that he has been misinformed—that Ran-
" dolph Marion has not been 'paying his
" court to the great heiress.' I believe I
" quote Mr. Roscoe's flattering words. Poor
" Randolph! his destiny is a far more en-
" viable one, suffering as it may be, than a
" heartless devotion to an heiress."

" I was interrupted by a summons from
" my father. He has made it his request
" that I should accept your invitation. You
" know I could only go by his request. 'He
" cannot,' he says, 'stay at Clarenceville
" without me; and a tour through the
" southern states may benefit his health.'
" Thus it is all delightfully arranged, and
" I shall be with you in the course of ten
" days.

"My father's *southern* tour may confirm "your suspicions in relation to Miss Marion. "You certainly condole with me, most "gracefully, on the prospect of a step-"mother, and the possible contingency of "a divided, and subdivided inheritance. "Honestly, my dear Mrs. Layton, such "probablities would, in my opinion, make "me a subject rather of congratulation than "condolence. Miss Marion's visit to us "has confirmed all my predilections in her "favour. She is intelligent, active, and gay. "Her gaiety is the sparkling of a clear and "pure fountain—and, my father says, the "result of a happy physical constitution; "for you know he thinks with the French-"woman, '*que tout cela dépend de la ma-"nière que le sang circule.*' You may think "this view of my friend precludes senti-"ment—or that my father is past the period "of romantic attachment; but I doubt if "age, or accident, or any thing but volun-"tary abuse, can deprive the affections of "their finest essence. There is, I assure "you, in neither party a want of sentiment, "nor an excess of it—no obstacle whatever

" to the event you predict, but such as the
" world never takes account of when it sends
" forth its rumours. The parties themselves
" have never thought of it, and have both an
" entire indisposition to matrimony. These,
" you know, may be as effective obstacles as
" that *only* one which poor Sir Hugh's
" benevolent efforts could not overcome in
" the case of Dr. Orkborne and Miss Marg-
" land—their 'mortal mutual aversion.'

" But I am spinning out my letter when
" my thoughts are busy with the delight of
" seeing you. Adieu, then, till we meet.
" My tenderest love to Emilie.

" Most affectionately yours,

" GERTRUDE CLARENCE."

Miss Clarence, after mending her pen, laying it down and resuming it half a dozen times, added the following postcript. Every body knows a lady's P. S. contains that which is nearest her heart.

" P. S. I am exceedingly obliged to you,
" my dear Mrs. L., for your assurance that
" you have been mindful of my request that
" you would not mention to your friend,

"*G. R.*, the fact of my having been at
"Trenton with you. You ridicule what
"you call a '*true femality*,' and define
"that to be something without rhyme or
"reason. But you say you love me better
"for it, and I am content with whatever
"produces this result."

"G. C."

At the appointed time Miss Clarence arrived in New York, and was welcomed by Mrs. Layton and Emilie with unequivocal demonstrations of joy. Mr. Layton, too, received her with the courtesy of a man of the world. Scarcely aware of the strength of her prejudices against him, she was surprised at his agreeable exterior, and bland manners. He had originally been very handsome, and though his heavy drooping eye-lids, and mottled cheek, indicated a man of irregular habits, his features still retained the beauty of symmetry, and his figure the ease and grace of a man of fashion.

There was an air of luxury and refinement in Mrs. Layton's establishment, beyond that usually produced by the union of

fortune and fashion. Her taste and imagination, and that love of the *recherché*, that is perhaps a subtle form of vanity, had led her to avoid whatever was common-place. Even the names of her children indicated her artificial taste. She relieved the simplicity of Emily, a name adopted in compliment to her grandmother, by giving it a French termination; and subsequently gratified her fancy by selecting for her younger children the rare names of Gabrielle, Victorine, Julian, and Eugene. In the arrangement of her house, she avoided the usual modes of vulgar wealth. She tolerated no servile imitation of French ornament; no vases of flaunting artificial flowers, in full eternal bloom; no pier tables covered with French china, kept for show, *not* 'wisely,' and looking much like a porcelain dealer's specimens, or a little girl's baby-house; no gaudy time-piece, confounding all mythology, or, like the Roman Pantheon, embracing all; in short, there was nothing common-place, nothing that indicated the uninspired, undirected art of the fabricator. The very curtains and carpets betrayed, in their web, the

fancy of the fair mistress of the mansion. There were few ornaments in the apartments, but they were of the most exquisite and costly kinds. Lamps of the purest classic form—the prettiest *allumette* cases and fire-screens that ever came from the hand of a gifted *Parisienne*—flowers compounded of shells, and wrought into card-racks, that might have served the pretty Naiads themselves, (if perchance visiting cards are the tokens of sub-marine courtesies,) and a Cupid, of Italian sculpture, bearing on his wing a time-piece, and looking askance, with a mischievous smile, at this emblem of the sternest of tyrants.

On a pedestal in one corner of one of the drawing-rooms, stood a bust of the Princess Borghese, said to bear a striking resemblance to Mrs. Layton, and on that account presented to her by a young Italian, who had given her lessons, *en amateur*, in his native language. Opposite to it was a Cupid and Psyche.

Connected with the drawing-rooms there was a library, filled with the flowers of foreign literature, and the popular produc-

tions of the day, and embellished with a veiled copy of Vanderlyn's Ariadne, and a beautiful portrait of Mrs. Layton, in the character of Armida. We do not furnish inventories, but merely data, to indicate the character of that establishment in which our heroine was now to be introduced to the society of New York. So much of it as was comprised within the large and fashionable circle of Mrs. Layton's acquaintance, poured in upon her on the first notice of her arrival, to offer courtesies in every accredited form.

Mr. Clarence was detained for a few days in Albany. When he rejoined his daughter in New York, and as soon as the first greetings were over, he said, "Of course, my child, you have explained to Gerald Roscoe the Trenton affair?"

We ought to state that Gertrude, after the disappearance of Seton, communicated to her father the story of the eventful night at Trenton. We will not say that she was quite as confidential to him as we have been to our readers, but she was as much so as could reasonably be expected; that is, she

communicated the leading facts, which bore about the same proportion to the emotions they had elicited, as a little fire does to the volume of smoke that evolves from it. Gertrude replied to her father's interrogatory, " I have not seen Mr. Roscoe."

" Not seen him ! that's most extraordinary. He certainly knows you are in town, for he has replied to the letter I sent by you. My child ! you are ruining the lock of that work box."

She was zealously turning and returning the key. " Mr. Roscoe, does not, I believe visit here now," she replied ; " Mrs. Layton says he has some coolness with her husband."

" That's no reason why he should not pay his respects to you. Of course Mrs. Roscoe has called ?"

" No, papa—she does not visit Mrs. Layton."

" Nonsense ! my oldest and dearest friends to stand on such punctilios as these ; I do not understand it—it is not like them. I shall go immediately and find out the meaning of it."

"Oh, papa!"—Gertrude checked the remonstrance that rose to her lips, and merely said, "At least, I beg you will say nothing to Gerald Roscoe of my having been the person whom he met at Trenton."

"Certainly not—if you choose to have the pleasure of surprising him when you meet—well, there's no harm in that;" and away went Mr. Clarence on a quest that was destined to prove rather unsatisfactory.

Gertrude mistook in supposing that Mrs. Roscoe had not called on her. Eager to see and to pay every respect to the daughter of her friend, she went to Mrs. Layton's on the very first day of Gertrude's arrival. Miss Clarence was at home, but it did not quite suit the convenience of the servant, whose affairs were in arrears, that she should be so, and he refused her, received Mrs. Roscoe's card, and suppressed it. On the following day Mrs. Roscoe wrote a note to Miss Clarence, saying, that she was unfortunately prevented by indisposition from repeating her call on that day, expressing her earnest desire to see her, &c. &c. The note was sent, but mislaid at Mrs. Layton's, and never

reached Gertrude. Two days afterward she again called, was told Miss Clarence was at home, and was shown into the parlor, and announced to Miss Layton, who was receiving morning company. Mrs. Layton was not present. Miss Layton did not know Mrs. Roscoe, and did not hear the name distinctly; and the coldness and seeming indifference which the poor girl now manifested alike to all, Mrs. Roscoe fancied was marked to her. Visitor after visitor appeared. It chanced that there were one or two among them who had formerly courted even a look from Mrs. Roscoe, and who now recognized her with a supercilious bow, or what is far more annoying, a greeting evidently meant to be condescending. Mrs. Roscoe was entirely superior to their slights or favors, but not to being disturbed by their ignorance that she was so. Her own delicacy forbade her enlightening them, and, with her impatience aggravated by these little irritations, she sat for a full half hour watching every opening of the door. No one can possibly estimate, or it may be, excuse her vexation,

who has not waited for half an hour, and at the end of it been told, as she was, by the heedless servant, "Oh, ma'am, I thought you inquired for the ladies—Miss Clarence is not at home." Miss Layton now perceived that the lady had suffered some negligence, and she advanced with an apology. Mrs. Roscoe left her compliments for Miss Clarence, and withdrew. Pedrillo entered as Mrs. Roscoe retired, and so suddenly and completely displaced her image, that Emilie never thought of her again. These little mistakes and neglects left both parties with the impression that each was aggrieved. Gertrude, of course, never returned the visits, and Mrs. Roscoe did not repeat them.

Mr. Clarence went to Mrs. Roscoe's lodgings, in the full confidence of a satisfactory *éclaircissement.* He was sincerely and deeply attached to the Roscoes; and certainly, the strongest wish of his heart was that his daughter should be favorably known to them; but he was far too proud of her, and too delicate, to solicit even Gerald Roscoe's attentions.

He was told that Mrs. Roscoe was at home, but 'engaged.' He sent up his card, with a request to see her. She was really indispensably engaged, but she did not think it worth while to detain him with an explanation of particulars; and she returned word that she was extremely sorry, but she could not then see Mr. Clarence. He left a request that Mr. Roscoe would call at his lodgings, in the course of the day, and went away more annoyed than he was willing to admit, even to himself.

Roscoe was out of town, and did not return till late at night. In the morning, before breakfast, he called on Mr. Clarence. *Before breakfast*, as our readers well know, was the dark hour to Mr Clarence. Instead of meeting Roscoe with the cordial greeting he anticipated, he received him coldly, and pettishly, and proceeded immediately to talk of some business concerns, that required Roscoe's immediate attention, as Mr. Clarence was to leave town in the twelve o'clock boat.

Roscoe was hurt and disappointed by Mr.

Clarence's reception. He had cherished a filial affection for him; and, shocked by his apparent indifference, he forgot to account for his not having called the day before. He thought Mr. Clarence betrayed an undue interest about his pecuniary concerns—'this detestable money!' he said to himself, 'it spoils every body!' He left Mr. Clarence to execute his business, and engaged to meet him again at the boat. He encountered some unexpected delays, and just got to the wharf in time to exchange one word with Mr. Clarence, as the boat, like a hound springing from his leash, darted away.

'Adieu,' thought Mr. Clarence, as he returned Roscoe's farewell bow, 'to my long-cherished hopes. What folly ever to stake our happiness on that which depends on the mind of another! Well, certainly the Roscoes were the last persons whose coldness and negligence I should have expected.'

The circumstances here detailed may seem very trifling; but has not many a friendship been wrecked by mistakes and misconceptions as trifling? and should not

those who know the value of this treasure, carefully guard it, and maintain it, on an elevation which these earthly vapors cannot reach?

CHAPTER VII.

"I know not whether the vicious or the ignorant man be most cursed by the possession of riches."—ANON.

"GOOD morning, my dear girls," said Mrs. Layton, entering Miss Clarence's apartment, "you see, Gertrude, I do not consider you in the light of a stranger. I never go down to breakfast. There is no *couleur de rose* in the morning tints of a domestic horizon. I hope *mio caro sposo* is civil to you.

"No one could be kinder."

"Oh, he is the pink of courtesy—to strangers—Pshaw! I forgot Emilie was in the room. You really look like the pattern-girls of a boarding school; do you mean

to immure yourselves all day with your books?"

"I assure you I have no such juvenile intentions," replied Gertrude; "I have business out this morning."

"Business! shopping of course?—a young lady can have no other business; commissions for the barbarians of Clarenceville? or a *bargain* for Harriet Upton?"

"No, no, Mrs. Upton would not trust me."

"Oh, then for yourself, of course?"

"No, Mrs. Layton, shopping is not my errand."

"I am glad of it. There is nothing so rustic and *countrified*, as the *empressement* with which country ladies rush forth to new hat, new shoe, and new dress themselves. You would lose your beautiful individuality, if you were to identify yourself with these people, in any particular—and besides, I had rather direct your sacrifices to the graces."

"My dear Mrs. Layton! did not you commend my taste, in my new hat and pelisse?"

"Certainly I did. There is genius in

dress, as in every thing else; and though not a particle of science, you may have some inspiration on the subject. Your dress harmonizes with a certain air of refinement and elegance that seems to be native to you. You do not, however, comprehend all the power of dress—I do—I have studied it as a science, and, to a woman, 'it is fairly worth the seven.' But your business, Gertrude, what is it?"

"I am afraid you will think it quite as rustic as shopping for country acquaintance. I am going to look up some of the friends of my childhood; our former humble neighbours of Barclay-street."

"Lord! have not you forgotten them?"

"My father has left me a list to assist my recollections."

"*Eh bien!* These sweet charities of life should not be neglected. But, dear Gertrude, you must not expect to find these people where you left them seven years ago; half the inhabitants of our city move every May-day."

"I foresaw that embarrassment, and sent Nancy to purchase me a Directory."

Mrs. Layton laughed. "There is certainly something novel in this enterprise of yours, Gertrude. A young lady of fashion and fortune setting off with a Directory, to seek out acquaintance of seven years since—and when time has so gently dropped the curtain of oblivion over them! But it *is* very amiable. You go first to the Roscoes, I presume?"

"No, I do not go there at all."

"You are right. They have behaved shabbily. Where, then, do you go?" Gertrude gave Mrs. Layton her list. Mrs. Layton smiled as she returned it,—"Go, my dearest, and get over it as soon as possible—and be careful and not commit yourself. These are the sort of people who will invite you to 'run in at any time'—'to be sociable'—'to come and pass an evening'—they 'are never engaged.' If they name any specific time, say you are engaged, and leave the rest to Heaven and me."

Thus instructed, Gertrude left Mrs. Layton, and was in the parlor, awaiting the carriage, when a short, snug-looking little gentleman, with an erect attitude, and that

lofty bearing of the head by which short men endeavour to indemnify themselves for the stinted kindness of nature, entered the apartment. The stranger had a round sleek face, shiny hair, prominent, bright blue, and rather handsome, though inexpressive eyes, and a mouth filled and crowded with short, regular, and white teeth. He smiled—and never did smile more truly indicate imperturbable good-temper, and perpetual good humor—he smiled as he announced himself as 'Mr. D. Flint,' and apologized for the early hour at which he had called. He 'had been disappointed so often in his efforts to see Miss Clarence, that he was determined to make sure of the pleasure now.' A servant announced the carriage. Mr. Flint handed Miss Clarence into it, and when there, and before Gertrude could frame a polite negative to his request that he might have the honor of attending her, he seated himself beside her, and asked whither he should order the coachman to drive. "To Fountain's," she replied, resolving she would drop her companion there. As if knowing he had short space, Mr. Flint improved it to the ut-

most. He described all the fashionable amusements—all the stars of the ascendant, and all as his familiars—promised to introduce this and that gentleman to her, persons of whom she had often heard, though never of *Mr. D. Flint*—discussed the last play—volunteered to send her the last new novel—offered to go to this place with her, and that place for her, and, in short, before they reached Fountain's, he had fairly woven himself into the woof and warp of her futurity. As the carriage turned towards the shop-door, it was intercepted by another vehicle, and obliged to pause for a moment. At that critical moment Gertrude's eye fell on Roscoe. He walked past, all unconscious that the individual whom of all others in the world he most desired to meet, was within his field of vision. "Did you know the gentleman you were looking at?" asked Mr. Flint. Miss Clarence blushed as if she were betraying a secret, and replied, 'she was not sure she knew to what gentleman he alluded.

'Oh, then I was wrong. I thought you bowed to Mr. Roscoe—a particular friend of mine." Miss Clarence was more than half

vexed at this interpretation of her eager glance, and, as Mr. Flint handed her from the carriage, she bade him a hasty and most decided 'good morning.' Mr. D. Flint, not at all discomfited at his abrupt dismission, felt much like one of the enterprising race of *squatters*, who having planted himself on the territory of some great proprietor, makes his *improvements* with the happy confidence that possession will gradually mature into right.

Miss Clarence directed the coachman to drive to Mr. Stephen Brown's, 3**, Broadway. 'My friends have risen in the world,' thought she, as the carriage stopped against a very elegant four-story house.

Stephen Brown had begun life in the humble calling of a journeyman tailor. His own industry, aided by a thrifty help-meet, rapidly advanced his fortunes. He abjured the goose, (even a goose should have taught him better), and followed his ascending star to a retail-shop in Chatham-street. A profitable little concern it proved, and Brown was translated to the higher commercial sphere of Maiden-lane. Here he acquired

property rapidly — the appetite, as usual, grew by what it fed on. From buying goods, Brown proceeded to buying lots. He was one of the few fortunate speculators, and the prudent age of fifty found him living in his own luxuriously furnished house in Broadway, with an income of 20,000 dollars.

Miss Clarence had known these people when, at a humble stage in their progress, they lived near her father. They had but one child—a good-natured, lawless urchin, whom she remembered as her brother Frank's favorite comrade in his boldest sports. The Browns sedulously cultivated this intimacy. They were ambitious to bring up 'little Stevy,' as they fondly called him, to be a gentleman, and they perceived that Frank Carroll had certain instincts of that race which were not native to their son. They sent 'Stevy' to the same school with Frank, and won Frank's heart by those little personal favors and indulgencies agreeable to men and boys. Miss Clarence had a very distinct recollection of the gifts and the rides Frank received from the Browns. She had a kindly remembrance of 'little Stevy' too.

She cherished every association with her brother, and it was the impulse of sisterly tenderness that now prompted her to seek out the Browns.

Mrs. Brown was at home, and Miss Clarence was ushered into an immense parlor, overloaded with costly, ill-assorted, and cumbrous furniture, where the very walls, shining and staring with gilt frames, and fresh glaring pictures, seemed to say, 'we can afford to pay for it.' A chandelier, of sufficient magnitude to light a theatre, hung in the apartment. An immense mantel-glass, half frame, reflected the gaudy and crowded decorations of the mantel-piece. Sofas, side-boards, (there were two of them, respectable pieces of architecture), piano, book-cases, the furniture of drawing-room, dining-room, and library, arranged side by side, indicated that the proprietors of the mansion had received their ideas from the ware-house, and had made no progress beyond cost and possession. Our heroine was making her own inferences in regard to their character, from the physiognomy of the apartment, when the servant returned

with the message that Mrs. Brown said, 'If the lady wa'n't no company, she might walk down in the basement.' Miss Clarence went, and was introduced to an apartment and a scene, which we shall exactly describe. The room was furnished with the well-preserved luxuries of the Browns' best parlor in Chatham-street—the only luxuries they ever had enjoyed. There were the gaudily painted Windsor chairs—the little, round, shining, mahogany candle stand—the motherly rocking-chair, with its patch-work cushion—the tall brass andirons—the chimney ornaments, wax fruit, plated candlesticks, and china figures—and edifying scripture prints, in neat black frames, adorning the walls.

Stephen Brown, the proprietor of this magnificent mansion, and of blocks of unmortgaged, unencumbered houses, was seated on a *table*, cross-legged, his shears beside him, and his goose at the fire, putting new cuffs on an old coat—his help-meet the while assorting shreds and patches for a rag carpet! What signified it that the one could have purchased the wardrobe of a prince,

and the floors of the other were overlaid with the richest Brussels? This scene, and these occupations awakened a train of agreeable associations, touched the chords that once vibrated to the highest happiness of which they were susceptible—the consciousness of successful diligence. Neither of the honest pair recognized, in the elegant young lady who entered, the little girl they had formerly known. Mrs. Brown untied her apron and huddled it, with her work, into a covered basket, pushed up the bows of her cap, smoothed down her shawl, and threw a reproving but unavailing glance at her husband, who, after peering over his spectacles at the stranger, pursued his work.

"You do not remember Gertrude Clarence"—said our heroine, kindly offering her hand to Mrs. Brown,—"you have not forgotten the Carrolls of Barclay-street?" The name with which Mrs. Brown was most familiar revived her memory—she welcomed Gertrude heartily; and Brown suspended his stitches to say he was glad to see her, and to inquire after her father. "I should not have thought," said the old woman,

apologetically, "of sending for you down to the basement, if I had surmised who it was, but I thought it was one of them society ladies, what brings round the subscription papers. It is a wonder I did not know you. You have got that same good look, though you are taller and handsomer; but, la! we all alter: some go on from spring to summer, and some from summer to winter," she shook her head, and sighed.

"But I do not perceive any change in you, Mrs. Brown: you are looking just as you did when you gave my dear brother that pretty little terrier-dog."

"Lord bless us! how well I remember it! them were happy days. It was the time he saved Stevy's life, as it were, when they were skaiting together."

"Better lost than saved," muttered Brown, in so low a voice, that Gertrude did not distinctly hear him. She inferred, however, that something had befallen 'the only child.' "Your son is living, I trust?" she said.

"Yes—a living trouble," replied the old man, harshly. The mother sighed, and Gertrude essayed to turn the conversation

into a more agreeable channel. "You have a very fine house here, Mrs. Brown," she said.

"Our neighbours have not got no better, I guess—you took notice of the parlours, Miss Clarence—you see we have not spared nothing—but, mercy's sake!" she added, lowering her voice, "what good does it do us, so long as Stevy is as he is?"

Our heroine ventured to explore the maternal sorrow a little farther, and ascertained that Stephen had forfeited his father's favour by his idle and expensive life, and was just now exiled from his home, and under his father's ban. After listening to Mrs. Brown's details, Gertrude, anxious to pour oil into the mother's wounds, replied in her kindest voice, "Oh, Mrs. Brown, most young men, with Stephen's expectations, are wild and idle—prodigal sons for a little while; but they come home to their father's house at last—and no doubt poor Stephen will."

"Bless you! that's so considerate. I tell *him* so," and she glanced her eye towards her husband; and, taking advantage of his being slightly deaf, and her back towards

him, she proceeded to pour her griefs into Gertrude's ear. "It's having a rich father that's ruined poor Steve—never was a better heart—never—but the poor boy has fallen into bad company, and, thinking he must get the old man's money at last, he's gone all lengths. If it had not been for Lawyer Roscoe—God Almighty bless him! if it had not been for him, Stevy would have gone to the Penitentiary; not that he was guilty to that degree, but he was snarled in with them that was. Mr. Gerald Roscoe saw right through it, and he took it up, and argufied it in court—and la! who could help believing him; and he cleared him, he did. And then he came here himself to tell us of it with such a beautiful smile—oh, a kingdom could not buy that smile! but *him* never so much as thanked Mr. Roscoe, and only just said, 'you may take your labour for your pains—not a shilling of my money shall go for the fellow, even if it were to save him from a halter.' Do you think Mr. Roscoe took offence? Not a bit—he never minded the old man's words any more than he would his stitches; but when *him* was

through speaking, he said, "You mistake me, friend Brown, I neither expected nor desire your money. I undertook your son's cause on account of his having been honoured with the friendship of a little favorite of mine, Frank Carroll."

"My brother!" exclaimed Gertrude, "did he say that?"

"To be sure he did, and that after looking into the business, and finding poor Steve was innocent, he had, for his own sake, done all in his power for him. And then he spoke so pretty for the poor boy, and begged us to take him home once more, and make his father's house the pleasant place to him, and let him have his friends here like other gentlemen, and get him married to some pretty, nice, discreet girl, and so on; and then he said, our money would be worth something to us. But, la! I can't give you no idea of it—I never heard any body talk so—my heart melted and was hot like within me—dear, a man's heart is harder—*him* never shed a tear nor spoke a word—nor he has never mentioned Stevy since, till just what he said to you."

"He has not forgotten him, though," replied Gertrude, in the same discreetly low voice which the mother used; "do you keep up a secret intercourse with your son?" Mrs. Brown eagerly bowed an assent. "Then use all your influence to persuade him to persevere in good conduct, and he will certainly win his way back to his father's heart and house." Gertrude rose to take leave. In answer to Mrs. Brown's inquiry of 'where she put up?' she mentioned Mrs. Layton's.' The name struck Brown—he dropped his shears, "Layton—Jasper Layton," he demanded, "in —— street?"

"Yes."

"Then, Miss, I advise you to have all your eyes about you—you'll want 'em. That man is on the high road to ruin—in straits for money, and he won't scruple borrowing from a lady—he stopped here in his gig and tandem yesterday—as if I'd lend a penny to a blade that drives a tandem; and then he came turning and twisting to his business. 'A very superb house you have here, Mr. Brown; an elegant room this—rich furni-

ture—you must be a happy man, Mr. Brown.'

"Happy! happy!" repeated Brown, as if the words brought out all the discords of his nature, "happy I've never been since I've earned more than I've spent; to be sure, sometimes when I sit down in this room with just my old furniture about me, with the old shears and goose, and put in a new patch, or set a new cuff, it does *feel good*—it brings back old times, when I sat over my needle, cracking my jokes from morning till night; and my old woman, not groaning and sighing as she does now-a-days, but singing like a lark over her wash-tub, with one foot on"—Brown's words seemed to choke him, and a child-like flood of tears gushed from his eyes—"on *Stevy's cradle*."

Gertrude, obeying the impulse of that sweet and generous nature, that made her estimate the affections of every human creature, however sordid and mean, as too precious to be contemned, advanced to the table on which Brown was still seated, and resting her hands on it, she looked at him with an animated expression of appeal and

intercession, that seemed to confound and overpower his senses; for he covered his face with his hands: "Oh, bring your son home again, Mr. Brown—try him once more—forgive the past."

"There's too much to be forgiven," interrupted Brown.

"But, my good friend, those that are forgiven much, you know, love much. Stephen will feel your kindness—he always had a good heart—a very good, kind heart."

"Did *he* ask you to speak to me?" said Brown, letting fall his hands, and looking piercingly at Gertrude.

"No."

"Did the old woman?"

Gertrude could hardly forbear a smile at Brown's suspicion of sinister influence. "No, indeed," she said; "it was yourself, Mr. Brown, that induced me to speak for your son—I perceived your heart was turning towards him."

"That's true! that's true!" exclaimed Brown, leaping from the table, "my feelings have been working like barm, ever since Mr.

Roscoe spoke to me;—if I thought—if I thought he would not go astray again—"

"Oh, try him—how often we all go astray! and yet does that prevent our expecting the forgiveness of our Father in heaven, when at each offence we ask it?"

"That's true again—and I have thought to myself, that I did not know how the Lord could forgive me, who am but his creature, and I be so hard to my own flesh and blood."

Gertrude saw the point was gained. "I shall come again, my friends," she said, "to see you—and to see Stephen, my dear brother's old friend; and I am sure that I shall find it *feels good* to you all again."—The old woman, who had been overpowered with emotions of surprise, and joy, and gratitude, now felt them all merged in admiration of Gertrude, which she expressed in a mode peculiarly feminine. "Oh, Miss Clarence! you and Mr. Gerald Roscoe have been such angels to us! you are just alike—you need not shake your head—I thought of it the moment you began to speak about Stevy—I am sure if there was a match made in heaven——"

"My good friend! Mr. Roscoe and I are strangers to each other."

"La! that's nothing. I can make you acquainted; come here and drink tea with me to-morrow evening: I will invite him, and then if——"

"If Stephen is here," said Brown, finishing her halting sentence, "there are no *ifs* in the case—Stephen shall be here."

Dame Brown's auspices were not precisely those under which Miss Clarence preferred to be introduced to Gerald Roscoe; and, availing herself of Mrs. Layton's hint, she pleaded an engagement, and terminated a visit that seemed, to the Browns, heaven-directed. Mingled with the pleasure of having been the instrument of good to others, there was in Gertrude's bosom a sweet and cherished sentiment of sympathy with Roscoe, arising from that best and truest of all magnetism, correspondent virtue.

We say she cherished this feeling—she did so, in spite of a very vigorous resolution to expel it; for she knew that as Miss Clarence, she was as yet, to him, an object of indifference, bordering on dislike; and she

dreaded lest any favourable impressions he might have received at Trenton falls should be effaced as soon as he identified the stranger he met there, with the heiress of Clarenceville. 'I cannot but wish,' she thought, 'that he who has been so beloved of my father, and who manifests such fond recollections of Frank, should be my friend'—and revolving this and kindred thoughts in her mind, she proceeded from the Browns' to Mrs. Stanley's. Here she was again surprised to find a lady whom she remembered as a bustling notable woman, on the shady side of fortune, emerged into its luxuries and sunshine. Mrs. Stanley had been thrown out of her natural orbit; and, as an itinerant lecturer remarked of the unlucky asteroides, she was of no 'farther use to society.' She would have made a most meritorious shopkeeper, or a surpassing milliner. There are few persons fit to be trusted with the selection of a mode of life, or who suspect how much they owe to Providence, for assigning to them an inevitable occupation. In our country, the idlers of fortune are to be compassionated. We have as yet no provisions

for such a class; they are not numerous enough to form a class, and each individual is left to his own resources.

A rich, motherless, uneducated, unintellectual woman, is one of the most pitiable of these sufferers. If she has no taste for the management of public charities, and no nerves to keep her at home; if she is healthy and active, she takes to morning visiting, shopping, frequenting auctions, and to that most vapid of all modes of human congregating—tea-partics.

Mrs. Stanley was issuing from her door, as Gertrude entered it. She expressed a sincere pleasure at seeing her, but her politeness soon became constrained, and her relief was manifest, when Gertrude rose to take leave, and inquired for a direction to Mrs. Booth's. "My dear, how fortunate!" exclaimed the good lady, "I am just going to an auction in our neighbourhood. Mrs. Booth will certainly be there; she is at all the auctions; though, poor soul, she lives at the world's end—how lucky you mentioned her! You will have a fine chance, if you wish to buy any thing, Miss Clarence—the

auction is out of season, and I expect the things will go off a bargain." Miss Clarence assured the lady that she should make no purchases, but should be glad to avail herself of so good an opportunity to pay respects to an old friend;' and accordingly, she suffered herself to be conducted to the durance of an auction. Mrs. Stanley was evidently on the *qui vive*, as much interested and fluttered, as if she were about to purchase the cargo of an Indiaman.

Our heroine had no very definite idea of an auction. She knew it was an occasion on which commodities were bought and sold; but she was quite unprepared for such a scene as is exhibited at a sale of fashionable furniture in a private house, and, astounded by the crowd, the pushing and jostling, the smiling impertinence of some, and nonchalance and hardihood of others, she dropped her veil and followed her companion timidly. Mrs. Stanley, with the intrepidity of the leader of a forlorn hope, pressed through the crevices that were civilly made for her by the men who occupied the entry, (the flank of the battle-ground,) and entered one of the

two spacious apartments, filled with fine furniture, and a motley crowd of all ranks, from the buyers of the costly articles of the drawing-room, to the humble purchasers of the meanest wares of the kitchen.

The sale had begun, and the ladies (precedence in our country is always, even on the levelling arena of an auction-room, ceded to the females,) the ladies were hovering—brooding better expresses the intentness of their attention—brooding over a table filled with light articles. There stood the hardy pawnbroker, mentally appraising every article, as was evident from her keen glances and compressed lips, according to the standard of her own price current. Next were old housekeepers,—familiar spirits there,—their unconcern and tranquil assurance contrasting well with the eager, agitated expression of the novices, who had come with the honest intention to buy as well as bid, and whose eyes were rivetted to the elected article with that earnest look of appropriation that marks the unpractised purchaser;—then there were young ladies leaning on their father's arms, their wishes curbed by the parental presence; and old ladies made prudent by experience

—troops of young married women, possible buyers; and troops of idlers, who loved better to see this slight agitation of hope and fear, than to stagnate at home.

There were but few persons of fashion present, and they seemed to disdain the element in which they moved, though they condescended to compromise between their pride and their desire to obtain possession of a costly article at an under price. The pervading spirit of trade and speculation spares neither age nor condition in our commercial city.

Our heroine, unknown and unnoticed, was sufficiently amused observing others, when Mrs. Stanley touched her arm, "My dear Miss Clarence! just hear what a bargain that dinner-set is going—let me bid on it for you."

"Excuse me, ma'am—my father has an abundance of china."

"Oh, but it is *such* a bargain!"

"I cannot abstract the bargain from the article, and that I do not happen to want."

"But, my dear, china never comes amiss, a store is no sore—fifty dollars only are bid

for it—if I had but had a place to put it in! I know," she added, in a confidential tone, "the whole history of that china. Mr.——, you know who I mean—the ambassador, brought it out with him. He died soon after, and it went off at his auction at twice the first cost. Mrs. Pratt bought it; her husband—a peculiar man, Mr. Pratt—sent it right off to Boyd's auction-room. Hilson—Hilson, Knapp, and Co. you know, bought it there; he failed the next week, and I bid upon it at his auction—Mrs. Hall overbid me; she died, poor thing, without using it, and Mr. Hall has determined to break up housekeeping—he is so afflicted. Oh, gone, at sixty dollars! what a sacrifice!"

"Is that gentleman Mr. Hall?" asked Gertrude, glancing her eye at a person who stood opposite to her, with a long weed depending from his hat, and dangling on his shoulder, to which he seemed to have committed the task of mourning, while he was absorbed in magnifying the value of the article under the hammer, by certain flourishing notes and comments: "A capital time-

piece, ma'am—given to poor Mrs. Hall by her late father. He selected it himself in Paris."

"You may confide in the sofa, ma'am—it is Phyfe's make—poor Mrs. Hall never bought any furniture but Phyfe's."

"Yes, madam, the carpets have been in wear one year; but poor Mrs. Hall has been shut up in her room, and seen no company in that time."

Gertrude, who well knew that the prefix of 'poor' is, in common parlance, equivalent to deceased, was smiling at the 'afflicted' husband's tender allusions to his departed consort, when Mrs. Stanley again touched her arm. "Do you know the gentleman in the next room, who is leaning against the corner of the mantel-piece? there, he is looking at you."

"Yes—no—yes," answered Gertrude, betraying in her contradictory replies, as well as in the instant flushing of her cheek, the emotions excited by thus accidentally encountering Gerald Roscoe's eye. He instantly bowed, and was taking off his hat, when his elbow hit a lamp on the corner of

the mantel-piece. "Goodness me! he has broken that lamp!" exclaimed Mrs. Stanley —"no, no, he has caught it—that was handsomely done! who is he?" Gertrude made no reply. "How strange you don't remember his name, Miss Clarence; he is a very genteel-looking man—twenty dollars only for that castor—my! what a bargain."

Gertrude, conscious of her burning cheek, and afraid her companion might observe it, was relieved by the reverting of her attention to the sales. She ventured one more timid and but half permitted glance towards Roscoe. He had left the place where he stood, and as Gertrude thought, might possibly be making his way to her. 'I can never encounter a meeting and explanation in this odious auction-room,' she thought, and, determining to avoid it by a sudden retreat, she was making a hurried apology and adieu to Mrs. Stanley, when that lady recollecting herself, exclaimed, "My dear! you forget you came here to see Mrs. Booth; there the old lady sits right behind us—twenty-five—twenty-five for that glass dish—no great catch—I'll just mention your

name, dear, to old Mrs. Booth—poor soul, she is so deaf!"

"Oh, then," said Gertrude, appalled by the idea of hearing her name screamed where she most particularly wished it should not be spoken at all, "Oh, then, some other time—I entreat, Mrs. Stanley." But before the protest reached the lady's mind, she had forced her way to Mrs. Booth, taken Gertrude's arm, pronounced her name, and returned to the table. Mrs. Booth, with the eagerness not to be at fault common to deaf persons, caught the name, and uttered in a high key, "Mrs. Lawrence! how *do* you do, my dear?" At this moment Roscoe had penetrated through the crowd, and, unperceived by Gertrude, stood a little behind her, but near enough to hear whatever might pass between her and Mrs. Booth. "I am right glad to see you, my dear!—such a surprise! how are papa and mamma, and husband?" Gertrude could not explain that she ha. no right to answer for more than one of he parties named, and she merely bowed and smiled as complacently as she could. "Any children yet, dear?" con-

tinued the kind-hearted querist. Gertrude most definitely shook her head. "Never mind, dear—uncertain comforts. You like living in the western country, don't you? And Mr. Lawrence is a great farmer, I hear. You are looking amazing well—not a day older than when you were married. Did your husband come to town with you, dear? La! if here is not Mr. Gerald Roscoe—waiting as patient as Job, to speak to me—Mrs. Lawrence, Mr. Roscoe."

Roscoe looked like a man suddenly awakened, from whom a delightful dream is fleeting. He however had the self-possession to bow, and express his pleasure at meeting *Mrs Lawrence*. "Such a surprise!" he said, significantly quoting Mrs. Booth's words—and added, "I forced my way through the crowd to pay my respects to you"—he depressed his voice—"and to pray you to release me from the promise I made you. My good deaf friend's introduction has rendered my request unnecessary. I am obliged to her for a favor that I confess I would rather have received from *Mrs. Lawrence* herself." Gertrude deliberated for a moment whether

she should rectify his mistake, or whether she should prolong, while accident befriended her, the mystery in which accident had enveloped her. She did not quite like to appear the humdrum personage—the Mrs. Lawrence of several years' standing whom she personated in the old lady's presentation; and she therefore said, with a mischievous pleasure in the perplexity she was inflicting, "Mrs. Booth has mistaken me for a married friend of hers, and Mr. Roscoe will perceive the propriety of not inquiring into a mystery which is so evidently protected by destiny."

Roscoe bowed. "I submit," he said, "and I confess I prefer the continuance of the mystery to the solution the old lady forced on me. I began to think the atmosphere of an auction-room as fatal to romance, as day-light to a ghost."

"It is certainly a place of disenchantment," said Gertrude; and, anxious to give the conversation a new direction, she continued, "I came here with a lady whom I had invested with the charms that memory gives

to those who are associated with our earliest pleasures. She took me, for the first time, with the companion of my childhood"—a shade passed over Gertrude's expressive face at this allusion to her brother, and suggested to Roscoe the identity of this tenderly-remembered companion with the hero of the Trenton adventure. There was an involuntary exchange of glances, and Miss Clarence began again: "She took us to the theatre, the circus, and the museum, and she was identified in my imagination with the excitement of those scenes. But the spell is completely broken here. Nothing in life seems to interest her so much as an auction bargain."

"There is her kindred spirit," said Roscoe, pointing to the very lady in question, "I am told she attends all these places as punctually as the auctioneer himself—that her house is a perfect warehouse of 'uncommon bargains.' My poor old friend, Mrs. Booth, is a more rational woman. She frequents the auctions, as a certain philosopher went to a hanging, '*en ama-*

teur.' She is perfectly deaf, and can take no part in individual hopes, success and disappointment, but she feels the *ground-swell*, and enjoys a sympathetic agitation from the general movement on the surface of human affairs."

"Human affairs!" exclaimed Gertrude. "We can hardly wonder at those philosophers who have treated our race as a subject for contempt and ridicule, rather than of admiration and hope. The most sanguine believer in perfectibility is in danger of forgetting the capacities of man, and giving up his creed altogether, when he looks upon the actual interest and pursuits that occupy him. But I perceive," she continued, misinterpreting Roscoe's smile, "that I am making myself very ridiculous—a prosing, reflecting recluse is quite out of place in this assembly. What picture is that the auctioneer is puffing at such a rate?"

Roscoe could not answer the question; the crowd prevented his seeing it. The man of the hammer proceeded with professional eloquence and pathos, "Five dollars

—five dollars only *is* offered—this is too bad, ladies—a first-rate picture in my humble opinion."

"Who is the painter?" inquired a professed connoisseur. "The painter, sir?—I really don't know precisely—doubtless some great young artist."

"Doughty, perhaps," suggested a kind friend, while a humble disciple of the fine arts pronounced it 'beyond all dispute, a production of Cole's. It had his clear outline—his rich coloring.'

"A landscape by Cole," cried the auctioneer, nodding gratefully to the sponsor, "a landscape by Cole—a very celebrated painter, Mr. Cole—six dollars—six dollars only offered for a picture by Cole."

"It is not very large," said a cheapening voice.

"If it were in a handsome frame," said our friend, Mrs. Stanley, "I would buy it myself. Six dollars *are* a bargain for one of Cole's landscapes."

"If one could only tell the design," cried a caviller."

"The design," replied the ready auc-

tioneer, "why it's evident the design is something of the water-fall kind, and that fine figure of the lady kneeling is put in for the beauty of it."

"Mamma," whispered a young lady who had made the grand summer tour, "it looks just like those sweet Trenton falls—do bid for it."

"Seven dollars!" called out the compliant mamma.

"Seven dollars—thank you, madam—going at seven dollars—bless me, ladies! one of those eyes is worth more than seven dollars—upon my word they are speaking."

At this moment Miss Clarence observed a woman, who stood near the auctioneer, look curiously alternately at her and at the picture, then whisper something to the person next her, who, after doing the same thing, nodded affirmatively to her companion, and said, so emphatically that Gertrude comprehended the motion of her lips, 'striking indeed!'

"Come ladies," cried the auctioneer, "favor me with one bid more—it is really too good to be sacrificed—something out

of Scott or Byron, though I can't give chapter and verse,'—'or perhaps,' he added, making a timely application of some classical scraps, picked up in his professional career, 'perhaps it is Hero, or Sappho; they are always painted near rocks and water.' Roscoe and Miss Clarence both laughed at the ingenious conjecture of the man of business; and Roscoe suggested that the picture should be elevated, as it could not be seen where he stood. The picture was instantly raised, and presented to them both a scene too deeply impressed on their imagination ever to be mistaken or forgotten. It was, indeed, Trenton-falls; precisely as they appeared on the night of their adventure with Seton. The moon, just risen above the eastern cliffs, tipped the crests of the trees with its silvery light, played on the torrent that foamed and wreathed in its smiles, and concentrated its rays on the figure of Gertrude, who appeared kneeling on the rocks, just without the dark line of shadow, that veiled the western shore.

There were no other figures in the picture, but imagination instantly supplied them;

and it seemed to Roscoe, that he again stood on those rocks—again saw Seton unclose his eyes, and Gertrude raise hers to Heaven, with the fervent expression of a beatified spirit.

"Oh Louis!" exclaimed Gertrude, involuntarily, then laid her hand imploringly on Roscoe's arm, then, conscious every eye was turned towards her, she shrank from his side, and disappeared. Roscoe's eye was rivetted to her retreating figure, but instantly recovering his self-possession, he assumed the air of an ordinary bidder, and called out to the auctioneer "fifty dollars."

No competitor spoke. The picture was knocked down to Roscoe. The amateurs, the pawnbrokers, the bargain-buyers, the whole host of veteran auction *tenders*, exchanged nods and smiles of derision and of pity, (for there were kind-hearted creatures among them,) at the *gullibility* of the novice. Even the auctioneer himself could not suppress a complacent smile, when he transferred the picture to Roscoe, who, deviating from the ordinary mode of business, gave a check for the amount, and requested imme-

diate possession. Curiosity spread through the rooms. The picture was at once invested with a mysterious charm, and a factitious value. Half a dozen voices in a breath begged another view. Roscoe very politely regretted that it was not in his power to oblige the ladies, said he paid an extraordinary price for the exclusive right to look at the picture—coolly rolled up the canvass, and withdrew; envied at last, as the possessor of a secret, and a *bargain*.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Who'er thou art, were mine the spell,
To call Fate's joys, or blunt his dart,
There should not be one hand or heart,
But served or wished thee well."—Halleck."

Miss Clarence left the auction-room, overpowered by confused and painful feelings. The mortification of seeing her own portrait, however disguised by the romantic position in which she was placed, exposed at a public sale, and bidden upon by Roscoe, at first blunted every other sensation. But considerations of deeper, and more painful, as well as of more generous interest, soon arose in her mind, and entirely possessed it. Seton was living—was enduring the extremity of misery, for nothing short of that

could have induced him to part with a picture which proved with what tenacity, with what fond partiality, he had retained her image. Estimating her personal charms more humbly than any one else would have done, Gertrude esteemed the portrait a lover's apotheosis of his mistress.

She had penetrated the crowded passage, and reached the outer door, when it occurred to her, that she might possibly obtain some clue to Seton, by ascertaining from the auctioneer how the picture came into his hands; and she turned to retrace her way to the parlour, but she was daunted by perceiving that her undecided movements were observed by those who had noticed her flushed and agitated countenance, as she had hurried through the entry; and, naturally interpreting others by her own consciousness, she believed the resemblance of the picture had been generally detected; and she felt herself at the mercy of whatever conjectures and inferences the vulgar and curious might make. More than ever embarrassed, she turned again towards the

door, got into the carriage, and, obeying a sudden impulse, ordered the coachman to drive to No. —, Walker-street — Mrs. Roscoe's address. At first occupied with the single desire to obtain Roscoe's co-operation in finding Seton, she determined to dissipate the little mystery in which she was involved. 'But why was this necessary to effect her purpose?' 'At least,' she thought, listening to those long-cherished feelings that were resuming their force, 'at least, why not retain my innocent *incognita*, till there is some object to be effected by resigning it. It certainly would not stimulate Gerald Roscoe's zeal to know he was serving Miss *Clarence*.

How much Gertrude's desire to see Roscoe's mother—the woman of all her sex she most desired to know, influenced her in selecting the mode of searching out Seton, we leave to those to determine, who are skilful in unravelling the intricate web of human motives. Certain it is, that when Mrs. Roscoe's door was opened to her, and she was told that lady was at home, she

would have exchanged her location for any other on the habitable globe. She was, however, somewhat reassured by finding the parlour vacant. The landlady, who admitted her, went to summon Mrs. Roscoe, and Gertrude was left to her own meditations. 'This, then, she thought, is the abode of the Roscoes — what a change from the sumptuous style in which they once lived! and yet it does not differ much from the picture my imagination has drawn; for here are the indications of taste, and refinement, and intellectual occupation. Her eye ran rapidly over the apartment. Nothing could be more simple than the furniture, but there was that grace and propriety in its arrangement, that mark the habits and taste of a lady. A piano, a guitar, and a flute, with music books, a few volumes of the best French and Italian authors, some choice English books, the best foreign and domestic reviews, a port-folio of drawings, a freshly painted bunch of flowers, copied from some natural ones still blooming in a tumbler, indicated the luxuries in which the Roscoes still indulged.

While Gertrude was eagerly gathering a little history from these particulars, the mistress of the house returned. She evidently thought some apology necessary for the delay of Mrs. Roscoe's appearance, and while she mended the fire, "I am sure," she said, "Mrs. Roscoe will be down directly; it is quite contrary to her habits to keep any one waiting. She has broken my Emma of ever fixing after company comes. She says we have no right to sacrifice others' time to our vanity, and Emma looks upon every thing she says just like the Proverbs."

Gertrude wondered that a lady whose punctuality was so exact should be so dilitory on this occasion. Her impatience arose from the fear that Roscoe might return before she could get away. "Perhaps," she said, rising with the intention of going, "perhaps Mrs. Roscoe is particularly engaged."

"Oh, no, Miss, nothing that will keep her more than a minute. Mr. Gerald came in just the minute before you did, with some great news, I suppose, for he was all out of breath, and he's telling it to his mother. It's

nothing disagreeable," she continued, observing Gertrude's countenance change, "I never saw two persons look happier. I should think Mr. Gerald had drawn a prize in the lottery."

"I will not disturb them, then," said Gertrude, moving towards the door.

"You'll not disturb them in the least, ma'am—there, they are coming now." Gertrude heard their footsteps descending the stairs: to retreat without being seen was impossible—to remain calmly where she was seemed to Gertrude quite as much so. They paused at the foot of the stairs, and were in earnest conversation. Gertrude, unconscious what she did, took up a book.

"My John's Spanish grammar," said the landlady, anxious to fill up the awkward chasm, and, having the liberal communicativeness natural to persons of her order, who have rather such a sympathetic turn of mind, she proceeded, "Mrs. Roscoe is giving my son lessons in Spanish. He is going out supercargo to south America, and she is as much engaged in it as if it were her own interest."

"Does Mrs. Roscoe understand Spanish?" asked Miss Clarence, hardly knowing what she said.

"La! yes, Miss, and every thing else, I believe. She has taught the world and all to my Emma; so she gets a genteel living as governess."

"I thought Mrs. Roscoe was an invalid."

"She is of the delicate kind, but she keeps off the thoughts of it by being always busy doing good to somebody, instead of pining and going to bed as some ladies do. I never knew her give up but once."

"When was that?" asked Gertrude, who was sustaining her part in the conversation with about as much interest as a person does while sitting in a dentist's chair, awaiting the coming of that dreaded executioner.

"Why that, Miss," replied the landlady, "was when that dreadful business of Mr. Gerald Roscoe's and the Laytons' was going on."

"What do you mean?" Gertrude would have inquired, for her curiosity was now thoroughly awakened. But again she heard

approaching footsteps. The loudest, firmest step was, however, evidently retreating, and she breathed more freely—the door was half opened, and she heard Roscoe, who was leaving the house, turn back and say, "Oh, I forgot to ask you whether you went to see Miss Clarence this morning?"

"Yes, I went; but there were half a dozen carriages at the door, and I did not go in—and on the whole I believe I shall not go at all."

"You are right. It can be of no consequence to her." The outer door closed, and Mrs. Roscoe entered. The blush of alarmed and conflicting feelings was still on Gertrude's cheek. She was in the presence of the woman whom of all others she most wished to please—and was nearly deprived of the faculties of speech and motion. Mrs. Roscoe apologized for having kept her waiting. There was a gentle courtesy and softness in her manners that seemed rather to appeal for the indulgence of others, than to indicate they needed it. Gertrude was somewhat reassured, made a bold effort, and remarked that 'it was unusually cold.' Mrs. Roscoe

thought on the contrary 'it was the warmest weather ever known at that season.'

Gertrude abandoned that ground, and observed that our climate was inconstant. Nobody could controvert this position, and there was a full stop. Mrs. Roscoe rang for more coal, begged Gertrude to draw nearer the fire, and exhausted all the little resources of politeness. Fortunately Gertrude, in removing her chair, knocked down the Spanish grammar, and now recovering in some degree the possession of her mind, she made a graceful allusion to what the landlady had said of Mrs. Roscoe's occupations.

"Ah, poor Mrs. Smith! no Pharisee ever had a more faithful trumpeter than she is to me."

"The voice of the trumpeter could hardly be mistaken for the genuine expression of gratitude."

"But I am really the debtor to my good land-lady; those know not how much they bestow, who give us objects of interest, and means of agreeable occupation." The ice was now broken, and never did a little boat, set free, more gladly bound over the

waves, than Gertrude skimmed over the light topics that followed, till she was checked by the very natural thought, that there was no propriety in deferring to announce her business. Mrs. Roscoe interpreted the embarrassed pause in the conversation; she saw that Gertrude's was the diffidence of excited sensibility, not of *gaucherie*, and, skilfully extending the aid of a leading question, she said, "There is perhaps a misunderstanding. Mrs. Smith is a blunderer—you did not say you had business with me?"

"Yes, indeed I did," said Gertrude, recovering herself, "but Mrs. Roscoe must blame herself if the pleasure of seeing her has put every thing else out of my head; I ought not to have forgotten that I had no pretence for my intrusion but business. I met Mr. Gerald Roscoe"—there may be those who, having felt similar emotions at pronouncing simply a name, will pardon Gertrude for faltering at "Roscoe," for the deep mortifying crimson that overspread her face, and for the tremulous tone in which she blundered through the simplest sentence possible—"I met Mr. Gerald Roscoe at an

auction this morning"—she would have proceeded to speak of the picture, but the words and the blush were enough—Mrs. Roscoe interrupted her, took her hand, and said, her eyes beaming with animation, "I understand all—I have the pleasure of seeing the lady of Trenton Falls. My son has already told me of his fortunate meeting with you this morning, and of his"——

"His bidding on a picture for me," said Gertrude, eagerly putting this interpretation on a wish she had implied by laying her hand on Roscoe's arm.

"No," replied Mrs. Roscoe, with a smile, "that was not precisely Mr. Roscoe's understanding—he flattered himself that the fortunate purchase was his own — but the fates are against him; on coming out of the auction room, he met the painter of the picture"—

"Good heaven!" exclaimed Gertrude, her cheek suddenly losing its heightened color, and becoming as pale as marble; "did he see him?"

"Yes—and he claimed the picture with such fervent feeling, that my son, reluctant

as he was to part with it, resigned it to him. He took it, intreated not to be followed, and disappeared."

"Then all clue to him is again lost!"

"Will you give my son authority to search for him?"

"Certainly—he will oblige me infinitely."

Gertrude rose to take leave; Mrs. Roscoe laid her hand on Gertrude's arm; "My young friend," she said, "we must not part strangers—strangers we are not; but I have as yet thought of you as a vision with which my imagination only could be familiar. I am delighted to have the assurance of my senses of your actual substantial existence—you must not leave me now. It is quite time for my son to return; let him have the pleasure of receiving your commission from your own lips."

"Oh, no, I cannot, indeed," Gertrude replied, in a manner so flurried that it was evident Mrs. Roscoe had suggested the strongest motive for her instant departure. "Then," said Mrs. Roscoe, detaining the hand Gertrude had extended to her, "at least give me your name; we should know

a lady who moves in daylight, and carries a card-case, by a less romantic designation than 'the lady of Trenton Falls.'"

This rational request placed Gertrude's *incognita* in a very ridiculous light, and feeling that it did so, she opened her card-case; but, recollecting that the step she had taken, though quite proper for a stranger, was awkward for Miss Clarence, and recollecting too that she had been neglected, shunned, and, as she believed, contemned by both mother and son, she reverted to her first decision, and closing the card-case, said, "Pardon me, Mrs. Roscoe, my name, unhappily, would dispel the little interest which it has been my good fortune to excite, and for which, mortifying as the confession is, I know I am indebted to the accident of a trifling mystery. It will be enough for Mr. Roscoe to know that his inquiries may relieve the most painful solicitude of one whom he has twice materially served."

"My son wants nothing to stimulate his zeal, though he may not be too modest to ask for your name to reward it; but pardon me, I perceive the subject is painful to you.

My son has it already in his power to communicate some circumstances in relation to your friend, of which you are ignorant. He knows that the young man passes by an assumed name, and at present sedulously conceals his place of abode. Something more he may have to tell, if you allow him the opportunity."

"Certainly; I will send my servant here to-morrow for any information he may be able to give me; and I beg that you, Mrs. Roscoe, will express to him my sense of his kindness." She then departed, leaving Mrs. Roscoe in a half pleasing, half painful state of uncertainty, but with a positive unqualified interest in Gertrude, and sympathy with Gerald.

"I have measured and weighed every circumstance," she said, after having related the particulars of Gertrude's visit to her son; "and I can hit on no solution more rational than the first that occurred to me. Your heroine, Gerald, has undoubtedly a clandestine attachment to this poor youth —she is evidently a woman of education, of thorough good breeding, of sentiment,

and uncommon refinement; this painter is some 'young Edwin,' of lowly fortune, frowned upon by her parents or guardians; and she is naturally anxious to maintain secrecy, while she still perseveres in her interest in the young man—poor girl, I shall pity her when she comes to know the history of his sufferings!"

Roscoe shook his head. "For Heaven's sake, my dear mother," he said, "do hit upon some other solution—this is purely feminine, and savours of old-fashioned ballad sentimentality."

"Really, Gerald, it does not become a youth, who falls in love at first sight with a nameless, mysterious fair one, to rebuke his mother's sentimentality—what other solution do you prefer? Would you be resigned to the truth that her name was a dishonoured one? disgraced by either parent?"

"I would prefer any reason for her mystery, independent of herself."

"Any explanation that left her affections free and attainable, Gerald?"

"Pretty well probed, mother. Yes, I would."

"Amen, my son; I have no fears that you will suffer from a predilection which as yet is a mere fancy; to tell the truth, I am half in love with the sweet girl myself. Abandon yourself to destiny, Gerald; if her affections are pledged, or if she is not worthy of yours, you will find it out in time; diseases have their day, and incurable love is not the malady of ours."

"Love! Heaven preserve us! mother, you do not fancy I am seriously in love?"

Mrs. Roscoe laughed—Gerald laughed, and blushed, and looked——we blush too, to apply the degrading epithet to the fine face of our hero, but it is the only one that accurately describes a certain expression that 'happeneth to all men'—Gerald Roscoe looked *sheepish*, and thus, for the time, the discussion ended.

Meanwhile Gertrude, whose perseverance in her mystery we by no means approve, nor would hold forth as a possible precedent for any of our young friends, was congratulating herself on her success, little dreaming of the suspicions to which she had made herself liable. The visit had been as in-

teresting to her as a voyage of discovery. Every thing she had seen and heard at Mrs. Roscoe's had tended to confirm her favorable impressions of that lady. She contrasted her elevated and happy mode of life, with Mrs. Layton's indolence, indulgence, and sacrifices to fashion; with the ignorance and vulgar expense of the Browns and the Stanleys; and she learned more of true philosophy and political economy from the morning's observation, than she would have gathered from volumes of dull treatises—more of the just use of property, and the true art of happiness.

The following morning she sent a servant with a note to Mr. Roscoe, containing a simple request, that he would send her whatever information he had obtained of her friend. The servant returned with a note. Gertrude inquired of her messenger if any questions had been put to him. "No; the gentleman had given him the note without speaking one word:" and Gertrude, ashamed that she had for a moment suspected Roscoe's interest or curiosity might overcome his delicacy, retired to her room, locked her

door, and closed her blinds, before she read the note. Strange are the outward signs of hidden feelings!

The note ran as follows: I am mortified "that I cannot relieve a 'solicitude,' (worth "the sufferings of its object to have ex-"cited,) by any satisfactory information of "your friend. I have ascertained merely, "that the picture, in the absence of its "owner and painter, (for who but a witness "of that scene could have made such a pre-"sentment of it?) was sent by his landlady "to auction. He returned, and found it "gone—and, alarmed at his loss, and still "more at the desecration of the picture by "an exposure to a public sale, he repaired "to the auction. I met him, as my mother "has already informed you, and, perceiving "to what a degree his sensibility was ex-"cited, I taxed my wits and magnanimity, "and, without any absolute sacrifice of ve-"racity, made it appear that the picture "had not been seen by any eye but mine, "and that I had assumed it as a trust for "him. He took it, and thanked me, as if "he had received something very like a gift

" of life; and then, intreating that I would " not inquire for him, and assuring me that " I should hear from him at some future " time, he left me. At your bidding, I have " violated his wishes, and made a most " thorough search for him. All I can ascer- " tain is, that he is constantly occupied " with his art, and is solicitous to remain " concealed. He has changed his lodgings, " after having told his landlady that inquiry " after him would be fruitless. My mother " imprudently told you I had something to " communicate of this person; but, unhap- " pily, it is nothing that can enlighten you " as to his present condition, or relieve any " anxiety you may feel as to what may have " been his past sufferings. He has suffered " long and severely from a malady of the " mind, which was finally relieved by judi- " cious care and medical art. For many " weeks past, I have reason to believe, his " external condition has been tolerable. " Whatever sorrows of the heart he may " still endure, are, perhaps, quite as much " to be envied as pitied.

" My mother bids me ask if there is not

"one drop of pity in your woman's heart "for the pains and penalties of curiosity? "For myself, I am at last resigned to the "penance you have inflicted. I am grateful "to fortune for past favours, and take them "to be an earnest of her future smiles. "The vision of a moonlight night, in the "bewildering scenes of Trenton, might be "the coinage of the over-wrought fancy; "but daylight, a city, and an auction-room, "are not visited by spirits, and a form that "moves on our *pavé* and in our hackney-"coaches, cannot escape the eye always in "quest of it—so says my awakened hope. "I have made a covenant with my lips, and "shall ask no questions, but humbly await "the hour when you, or kind chance, shall "reward my forbearance. I shall not wait "long, if you are but half as much im-"pressed as I am with my own greatness in "this matter. If I can be of any farther "use to you, I pray you to command the "services of

"Your very humble servant,

"GERALD ROSCOE."

Gertrude's solicitude for Seton was rather augmented than abated by this communication. It was evident that Roscoe knew more particulars of Seton's suffering than he imparted; and she was left to conjecture, but not to exceed in her most distressful imaginings, the real truth.

The main subject of Roscoe's letter did not so utterly engross her but that she scanned every word. 'There is nothing in it,' thought she, after having thoroughly weighed it—'nothing more than bare curiosity—and why should I expect to find any thing else? Poor Louis—how can my thoughts wander from you!' Gertrude was yet to learn that expectations arise unbidden and unauthorized—that duty cannot controul or guide our subtle thoughts. Hers reverted to Roscoe. 'Perhaps I have done wrong—this assumption of mystery—my gratuitous visit, are certainly contrary to my father's maxim—that a young woman should never depart from the established and salutary rules of society—that she should live within the barriers. But is not this

fastidiousness? Life would be dull enough if we must for ever walk in the trodden path—never follow the inspiration of feeling. Still, my going thither, betrayed my feelings—what feelings! How unlike Roscoe's letter is to Louis's distant, delicate, fearful devotion! But why should there be any resemblance? What could that talking woman mean by his affair with the Laytons?'

"Shall I take out your pink or fawn-coloured dress for this evening?" asked Gertrude's maid, who entered, and interrupted and put to flight her sweet meditations. The important decision between the rival colours was soon made, and Gertrude joined a brilliant musical party in the drawing-room.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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